

PART II: METHODOLOGY AND TECHNIQUES OF KRIYA YOGA

Disclaimer

The techniques described herein are exposed for study purposes only and should serve as a comparison with the works of other researchers. The author hopes this work will inspire intelligent feedback. Any remarks, criticism, corrections, and/or additions are welcome. Before you begin posing all kinds of questions to yourself, read through Part II and Part III of this book so you have a thorough understanding of the matter. You'll find that as you go through it many questions will be answered.

I wish to make clear that this book is not a Kriya Yoga manual! I may write one and face the problem of dividing it into different lessons and giving all the necessary instructions for each level. However, certain delicate techniques e.g. Maha Mudra, Kriya Pranayama, Thokar, and Yoni Mudra cannot be learned from a manual and require the help of an expert to check their execution. Each person is different so it is not possible to predict what effects an intensive practice might have on a particular individual.

The author disclaims any responsibility in case of negative results, especially if the techniques are practiced without first having their execution checked by an expert. Those who intend to carry on this practice should do so with a due sense of sacredness and awareness of the wealth it can bring to their life. Although you should have the right and the duty to control your own destiny, securing expert counsel or guidance is indispensable.

When you go to an expert, please advise them of physical problems, such as high blood pressure, lung problems, or signs of hyperventilation If you have a particular physical problem or handicap, an expert can lead you through a very mild form of Kriya Pranayama and the corresponding Mudras – and if necessary, may recommend that you practice them only mentally.¹

¹ To check if refinements have been added to the description of the techniques, visit www.kriyayogainfo.net at least once a year.

CHAPTER 6

INTRODUCTION TO THE PRACTICE OF KRIYA YOGA

Location of the Chakras and position for meditation

• *Location of the Chakras*

The *Chakras* are subtle astral (ethereal) organs inside the spinal cord; ideal steps on a mystic ladder guiding one safely to the deepest ecstatic experience. In *Kriya Yoga* it is not as much important to visualize a *Chakra* with petals, with a *Bija Mantra* in its center, with a *Yantra*... and with all you can find in New Age books, as to perceive approximately its location. The practice of *Kriya Yoga* refines this perception.

When certain particular conditions are established – mental silence, relaxation, an intense aspiration of the soul – the practice of *Kriya Pranayama* takes, so to say, the "inward route" and the Spiritual Reality manifests. You will then perceive, in the astral dimension, the reality of the *Chakras*. You will be able to listen to their astral vibration as well as hues of light pouring forth from their locations. The practice of *Kechari Mudra* (explained in chapter 7) fosters this experience, especially when the "wind" of the breath subsides.

The nature of each *Chakra* reveals two aspects, one internal and one external. The internal aspect of a *Chakra*, its essence, is a vibration of "light" attracting your awareness upward, toward the Spirit. The external aspect of a *Chakra*, its physical side, is a diffuse "light" enlivening and sustaining the life of the physical body.

Now, while climbing the ladder of the spine during *Kriya Pranayama*, you can conceive the *Chakras* as tiny "twinkling lights" illuminating a hollow tube which is the spinal cord. Then, when the awareness is brought down, the *Chakras* are internally perceived as organs distributing energy (coming from the Infinity above) into the body, enlivening the part of the body which is in front of them.

The first *Chakra*, ***Muladhara***, is at the base of the spinal column just above the coccygeal (tailbone) region. The second *Chakra*, ***Swadhisthana***, is in the sacral region, halfway between *Muladhara* and *Manipura*. The third *Chakra*, ***Manipura***, is in the lumbar region, at the same level as the navel.

The fourth *Chakra*, *Anahata*, (more simply called heart *Chakra*) is in the dorsal region; its location can be felt by bringing the shoulder blades closer and concentrating on the tense muscles in the area between them or just below them. The fifth *Chakra*, *Vishuddha*, is located where the neck joins the shoulders. Its location can be detected by swaying the head from side to side, keeping the upper chest immobile, and concentrating on the point where you perceive a "cracking" sound.

The sixth *Chakra* is called *Ajna*. *Medulla oblongata* and *Bhrumadhy* (the point between the eyebrows) are strictly related to *Ajna* and can not be considered as separated entities. *Medulla* is considered the physical counter part of *Ajna Chakra*. What matters is that by finding stability of concentration in any of the three points, the spiritual eye (*Kutastha*), a luminous point in the middle of an infinite spherical radiance, appears at the interior vision. This experience is the royal entrance to the spiritual dimension. Sometimes the term *Kutastha* is utilized at the place of *Bhrumadhy*.

In order to locate *Medulla*, at the top of the spine, raise your chin and tense the muscles of the neck at the base of the occipital bone; then concentrate on the small hollow under that bone. *Medulla* is just anterior to that hollow.

Moving from the seat of *Medulla* toward the point between the eyebrows, it is not difficult to locate the seat of *Ajna*: swing slowly your head sideways (a few centimeters left and right) having the sensation of something connecting the two temples. The seat of *Ajna Chakra* is the intersecting point of two lines: the line connecting the seat of *Medulla* with the point between the eyebrows and the line connecting the two temples.

The energy flowing through the tip of the tongue during *Kechari Mudra* stimulates the **pituitary gland**. The pituitary gland, or hypophysis, is an endocrine gland about the size of a pea. It forms a protrusion at the bottom of the brain hypothalamus. It is worthwhile clarifying this because a famous *Kriya* school counsels to focus on this gland in order to obtain the experience of the spiritual eye.

The same school emphasizes the role of the **pineal gland**. This is another small endocrine gland in the brain. It is shaped like a tiny pine cone (symbolically, many spiritual organizations, have used the pine cone as an icon). It is located behind the pituitary gland, at the back of the third ventricle of the brain. Having full experience of the white spiritual Light after long concentration upon the pineal gland it is considered the last

action that you do to perfect your meditation before being lost in *Samadhi*.

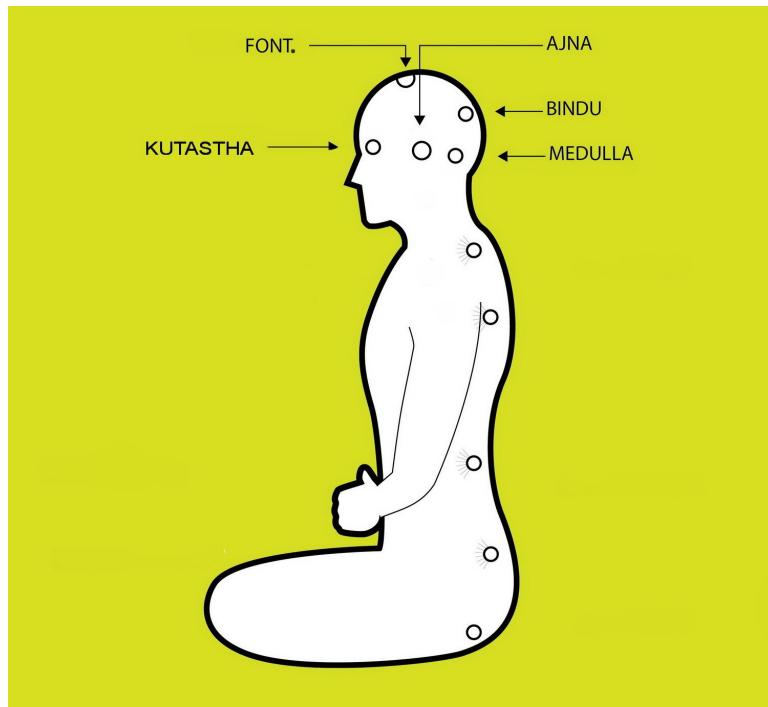


Figure 1. Location of the Chakras

In the commentary on the Bhagavad Gita by Swami Pranabananda Giri there is a hint to two further spiritual centers in the brain: ***Roudri*** and ***Bama***. *Roudri* is located on the left side of the brain above the left ear, while *Bama* is located on the right side of the brain above the right ear. We shall have the opportunity to utilize them during the practice of those *Higher Kriyas* that happen in the upper part of the brain.

Bindu is located in the occipital region and is not considered a *Chakra* in itself. However it is a very important spiritual center because it works as a door leading the awareness to ***Sahasrara*** – the seventh *Chakra* located at the top of the head. *Bindu* is located where the hairline twists in a kind of vortex (This is the *Sikha* point where the *Hindus* leave a lock of hair after having shaved their head.)

In order to become aware of *Sahasrara* some schools counsel to focus on ***Fontanelle*** [the anterior fontanelle more properly called "Bregma".]

The **eighth Chakra** is the highest center we are going to consider. It is located at about 30 centimeters above *Fontanelle*.

- *Position for Meditation*

One should sit facing east. According to Patanjali, the *yogi's* posture (Asana) must be steady and pleasant.

Half-lotus: Most *kriyabans* are relaxed in this sitting position, which has been used since time immemorial for meditation, because it's comfortable and easily managed. The key is to maintain an erect spine by sitting on the edge of a thick cushion so the buttocks are slightly raised. Sit cross-legged with the knees resting on the floor. Bring the left foot toward the body so its sole is resting against the inside of the right thigh. Draw the heel of the left foot in toward the groin as much as possible. The right leg is bent at the knee and the right foot is comfortably placed over the left thigh or calf or both. Let the right knee drop as far as possible toward the floor. The shoulders are in a natural position. The head, neck, chest, and spine are in a straight line as if they were linked. When the legs get tired, reverse them to prolong the position. The best hand position is with fingers interlocked as in the well-known photo of Lahiri Mahasaya. This balances the energy from the right hand to the left and vice versa. The hand position for meditation and for *Pranayama* is the same because you move from *Pranayama* to meditation without interruption. Usually you don't even realize it. For certain health or physical conditions, it may be beneficial to practice the half lotus on an armless chair provided it is large enough. In this way, one leg at a time can be lowered and the knee joint relaxed!

Siddhasana: (Perfect Pose) is of medium difficulty. The sole of the left foot is placed against the right thigh while the heel presses on the perineum. The right heel is against the pubic bone. This leg position combined with *Kechari Mudra* closes the pranic circuit and makes *Kriya Pranayama* easy and beneficial. It is said the position helps one to become aware of the movement of *Prana*.

Padmasana: (lotus position) a difficult, uncomfortable position; the right foot is placed on the left thigh and the left foot on the right thigh with the soles of the feet turned up. It is explained that when this *Asana* is combined with *Kechari* and *Shambhavi Mudra*, it results in an energetic condition that produces the experience of the internal light coming from each *Chakra*. It helps keep the body from bending or falling over as it tends to do when deep *Pratyahara* is practiced. *Padmasana* is uncomfortable for a beginner because the knees and the ankles become extremely painful. I would not advise anyone to perform this difficult posture; some *yogis* have

had to have knee cartilage removed after years of forcing themselves into the *Padmasana*.

KRIYA PRANAYAMA TECHNIQUE

[Classic explanation: four basic points + three subtler points]

The following description of *Kriya Pranayama* corresponds to what is given by different teachers that maintain they are teaching Lahiri Mahasaya's *Original Kriya*. On the other end, we are not occupied with *Kriya Pranayama* as given by those organizations that bring ahead the teachings of PY.

[I] **Deep breathing with throat sound**

Start the practice of *Kriya Pranayama*. Assume your favorite meditation position. Sit facing East. From now onwards you can utilize the trick described previously sitting on the edge of a thick cushion so the buttocks are slightly raised. The chin is little down, near the chest (your neck muscles maintain an even slight tension.) Your fingers are interlocked like in the well-known photo of Lahiri Mahasaya. Mouth and eyes are closed. Feel that the center of your awareness is located at *Medulla* while the inner gaze converge effortlessly on *Kutastha*.

Inhale deeply through the nose producing an unvoiced sound in the throat (like in *Ujjayi Pranayama*). ² To make certain the sound is correct, concentrate only on increasing the friction of the air flowing through your throat. A muffled sound will originate. Increase its frequency. If the surroundings are perfectly still, a person could hear it within a 4-5 meter radius – by no means outside it.

Kriya Pranayama is to be practiced with a deep abdominal breathing. This means that, during inhalation the upper part of the thorax remains almost immobile while the abdomen expands. Shoulders are not raised. During exhalation, the abdomen comes inside. Count the number of breaths utilizing a *Mala* [rosary beads] or the fingers. To start, you will practice 24 breaths. In time you will increase by 12.

² The sound of inhalation is similar to the amplified background noise of a loudspeaker – a quiet *schhhh... /ʃ/*. There is only a slight hiss during exhalation. The perfection of the sound will be reached through *Kechari Mudra* proper. The sound of inhalation will be very subtle, while the exhaling sound will be flute-like: *Sheee Sheee [ʃi:]*.

[III] Mentally chant *Om* in each *Chakra*. Enjoy the breathing process.

During inhalation, *Om* is mentally chanted (or, more simply, "mentally placed") in each one of the six *Chakras* from *Muladhara* to *Medulla*. During exhalation, *Om* is mentally chanted in the *Medulla* and in all the other *Chakras* coming down to *Muladhara*.

Don't lose the focus of your inner gaze on *Kutastha*. It is clear that going up and down the spine producing the throat sound and at the same time placing *Om* in each *Chakra* is difficult. However, Lahiri Mahasaya wrote that going ahead without chanting *Om* in each *Chakra*, your *Kriya* becomes "tamsic" [of negative nature] and many kinds of useless thoughts arise. Therefore try to calm yourself and get this result.

Have a deep breath, then another: don't worry about the length of inhalation and of exhalation. (After some breaths you discover that your breath lengthens naturally.) Enjoy the beautiful feeling of fresh air that seems to come up through the spine and pierce each *Chakra*, enjoy the warm exhaled air permeating each zone of the body from top to bottom. You actually perceive this. This is not a figment of your imagination! Merge your awareness with the beauty of this deep breathing.³

A short pause between inhalation and exhalation and between exhalation and inhalation comes naturally. The pause do no last more than 2-3 seconds. Each pause is a moment of comfortable peace.

[III] Perceive the energy moving through the spine

After some days or weeks of regular practice, during inhalation, you will perceive a cold current coming up through the spine – or simply a diffused fresh sensation. During exhalation you will perceive a lukewarm sensation in the spine. Exhalation could be longer than inhalation. During the last part of the exhalation, there is a clear perception of the navel moving in toward the spine. By refining this experience – being more aware of the navel moving inward and of the action of the diaphragm muscles – you will feel an ecstatic sensation.

³ Reference literature says that perfect *Kriya Pranayama* is 80 breaths per hour – about 45 seconds per breath. A beginner is far away from reaching such rhythm. For a beginner if each breath lasts 20 seconds, this means that the practice is very good.

[IV] Position of the tongue: *Kechari Mudra*

Kechari Mudra means inserting the tongue in the hollow of the nasal pharynx. *Kriya Pranayama* should be practiced with the tongue in that position. I say "should" because very few people are able to practice in that way. [In the next Chapter we shall introduce a method (*Talabya Kriya*) to achieve *Kechari Mudra*.]

The ancient *yogis* discovered the importance of connecting the tip of our tongue with the seat of the calm *Prana* in the brain. Usually our tongue is normally unable to touch the uvula and, consequently, enter the nasal pharynx. Because of this, we are limited in our connection with the great reservoir of energy existing in the *Sahasrara* region.

The practice of *Kriya Pranayama* with *Kechari Mudra* represents an enchanting experience, one of the best moments in the life of a *kriyaban*. However many must be contented by keeping their tongue in the "baby *Kechari*" position. What does this mean? It means that with the tip of your tongue you touch the upper palate at the point where the hard palate becomes soft. This easy-to-achieve position of the tongue is enough to make the mind very still.

THREE HIGHER TECHNICAL DETAILS (to be implemented at least after one year of practice)

[V] Listening to the sound like a "flute" of the breath

Make the sound of the breath subtler and subtler. The exhalation arising in the nasal pharynx has a fine sound like a faint whistle.⁴ This sound is produced in the upper part of the nasal pharynx. The sensation is that it originates behind *Kutastha*. It has been likened to the "flute of Krishna". Lahiri Mahasaya described it as "similar to blowing air through a keyhole". He described it as "a razor which cuts off everything related to the mind". It has the power to cut out any external distracting factors including thoughts, and comes at the maximal point of relaxation. If you feel like this, you have only one duty: to relax more, letting that this sound absorbs your mind completely.

⁴ In order to have an idea of it, take a whistle, blow, diminish, diminish until it is barely audible. Consider an empty perfume sample, without cap. Close one nostril. Put the opening of the sample under the open nostril and have a long but subtle exhalation. Move up and down the sample experiencing all the variations of the produced whistle sound. At a certain point you will obtain a fantastic whistle and say: "This is it"

[VI] *Listening to the internal (astral) sounds*

Now then, this flute sound is one thing and the astral sounds is another thing. However, a long concentration upon the flute-like sound is the best action to listen to the internal astral sounds. These sounds come from the activity of the *Chakras*. A great experience is hearing a distant sound of a long-sustaining bell (the sound of *Anahata*.) The experience of the "bell" changes into the sound of "many waters." This is the real sound of *Om* that guides the soul to travel through the spine, contacting the Divine Light in the upper part of the head. Lahiri Mahasaya described it as a sound "produced by a lot of people continually striking the disk of a bell and as continuous as oil flowing out of a container". Surely, when you hear the sound of running waters or of waves breaking over cliffs, you can be sure you are on the right track.

Modesty is always welcome but when this result is achieved, the positive euphoria is so overwhelming that it cannot be contained (like finding Aladdin's magic lamp.) In *Kriya* literature, it is said that those who realize a perfect *Pranayama*, can achieve everything through it. Well, if we dream of a faultless *Kriya Pranayama*, then what we have described matches the ideal of perfection.

A very important fact to understand is that the event of perceiving these sounds is not produced by the intensity of a unique moment of deep concentration but by the accumulation of effort manifested during daily sessions of *Kriya* (effort is the meticulous attention to any internal sound, no matter how faint). What is essential is to bring ahead a continuous will to listen internally. Each chanting of the syllable *Om* should be accompanied by an unswerving will to track down the echo of this vibration until you become aware of the astral sounds. Your listening skills will improve.

Those who are not able to hear any internal sound should not conclude something is wrong. Maybe they have done an enormous effort whose fruits will be enjoyed during the next day's practice or some day in the future. A sign one is heading in the right direction is a sense of mild pressure, like a sensation of liquid peace above or around the head often accompanied by a certain humming in the entire occipital region.

[VII] After many repetitions of *Kriya Pranayama*, move the focus of your awareness from *Kutastha* to *Fontanelle*

This practice is a real jewel, it embodies the quintessence of Beauty. Time goes by without much notice and what could seem to be an exhausting task turns out to be as easy as a moment of rest. However we must remember that to practice of *Kriya Pranayama* with a strong concentration on the upper part of your head is not appropriate for a beginning or medium level students. Developing a strong magnet in *Sahasrara* is the most powerful way of stimulating the *Kundalini* awakening. This implies acting on our Subconscious Mind bringing to the sphere of consciousness some contents that we are not able to assimilate. The person who experience this, especially if he/she is far from emotional maturity, might experience an entire range of negative moods.

If you decide to face this situation, you can, from now onwards, after about 4x12 repetitions of *Kriya Pranayama*, move the center of your awareness into the upper part of your head. *Kriya Pranayama* is to be practiced by adopting a specific *Mudra* which is an evolution of the classical *Shambhavi Mudra*. Let us learn it.

Shambhavi Mudra is the act of concentrating on the space between the eyebrows, bringing the two eyebrows toward the center with a slight wrinkling of the forehead. Now, there is a higher form of *Shambhavi* that requires closed or half-closed eyelids. (Lahiri Mahasaya in his well-known portrait is showing this *Mudra*.) The eyes look upward as much as possible as if looking at the ceiling but without any head movement. The light tension perceived in the muscles of the eyeballs gradually disappears and the position can be maintained rather easily. A bystander would observe the sclera (white of the eye) under the iris because very often the inferior eyelids relax. Through this *Mudra*, all one's *Prana* collects at the top of the head.

The practice seems to have a life of its own. You will eventually have the impression of crossing a mental state, which is like falling asleep, then suddenly returning to full awareness and realizing you are basking in a spiritual light. It's like a plane emerging from clouds into a clear transparent sky.

HOW TO CLOSE YOUR KRIYA PRANAYAMA SESSION

This is the most pleasing part of the routine. *Chakras* are like knots that can be untied if "touched" by one's concentration. One feels vast and free as the sky and knows the formless joy. A *Kriya* routine that does not end with the enjoyment of such sweetness is like an orchestra going on stage, unpacking the instruments, tuning them and then leaving at once!

After three deep breaths, let your breath be natural and forget it. Move your awareness up and down the spine pausing in each spinal center for about 10-20 seconds. Start with the first, pause there, move to the second, pause....and so on. After ascending to the *Medulla*, start the descent, pausing in the fifth *Chakra*, fourth *Chakra*, and so on. One complete round lasts about 2-4 minutes.

Try to catch the sweetness emanating from each *Chakra*. It does not suffice to keep on exerting a mental and even physical pressure on each *Chakra*, unable to relax. Do not complicate the teaching with various details (which could be useful in other techniques but not in the present one – contracting the muscles near each *Chakra*, utilize intense visualizations and *bija mantras*.... You risk all the sweetness is dispelled. Even ... mentally chanted Om in each *Chakra* may be disturbing.

The secret lies in maintaining the awareness in each of them until a sensation of sweetness is felt, as if the *Chakra* were "melting". It is important you assume a passive attitude and patient as well, with total reliance on what will be revealed by the practice itself.

So remember: *mental Pranayama* must be brought ahead with great seriousness until a deep silence settles in the consciousness. While going ahead with the *Kriya path*, you will discover that the *mental Pranayama* will turn first into the *Second Kriya* and finally will become the supreme form of *Kriya Pranayama*, the one that Lahiri Mahasaya called *Uttam Pranayama* (*Excellent Pranayama*.)

You will learn to utilize your meditation born intuition for effective handling any issue that arises from life. Inside the perfect transparency of an inner order, all problems are solved. I think that one is "born" to *Kriya* (understand the greatness of what they are doing) while perceiving the effects of such sweet practice: its beauty overflows our lives.

"... it's hard to stay mad, when there's so much beauty in the world. Sometimes I feel like I'm seeing it all at once, and it's too much, my heart fills up like a balloon that's about to burst... And then I remember to relax, and stop trying to hold on to it, and then it flows through me like rain and I can't feel anything but gratitude for every single moment of my stupid little life. (From the movie American Beauty; 1999) "

CHAPTER 7 (CONTINUATION)

The practice described in the preceding chapter is unique, you won't find another similar with regard to beauty and sweetness. Now, to add something (*Maha Mudra, Navi Kriya e Yoni Mudra*) has in itself a slight probability to damage this idyll. You know, traditional teaching of the *First Kriya* includes those three practices. So has Lahiri Mahasaya decided. I will try to explain how to utilize them in the best of the ways. Of course, you can avoid them, shun them. Not only that, you can decide to practice other techniques – for example the traditional *Pranayamas* like *Nadi Sodhana Pranayama, Kapalabhati, Bhastrika*.... and you can tell me that they are fare more useful than what is given by the tradition of *Kriya Yoga*. This life is yours. You will decide whether you should find a place for them in your routine.

Apart from that, you will find here an extremely useful tool: the *Incremental Routine* of a single technique. Few *kriyabans* are informed about this opportunity. Believe me, it is worth dwelling on such concept. It can change your life!

OTHER TECHNIQUES PART OF FIRST KRIYA INITIATION: MAHA MUDRA, NAVI KRIYA, YONI MUDRA

MAHA MUDRA

Use a carpet placed on the pavement to practice the following procedure.

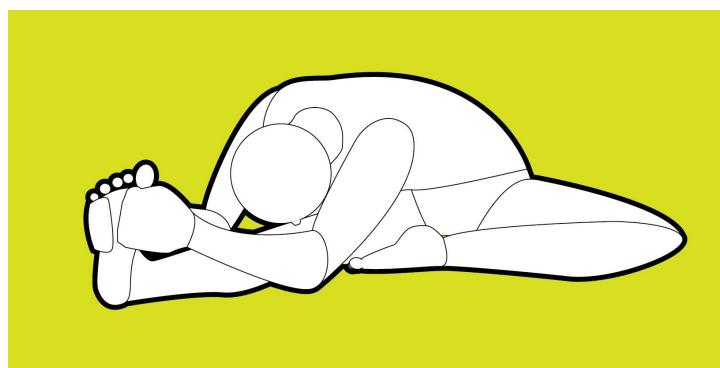


Figure 2. Maha Mudra

Bend the left leg under the body so the left heel is as near as possible to the perineum; the right leg is fully extended in front. Inhale deeply, feel the energy coming up in the head. Hold the breath, stretch forward (in a

relaxed way) so that you can grasp the toes of your right foot with both hands and gently pull them backwards. In this outstretched position, the chin is pressed naturally against the chest. Continue holding the breath and mentally chant *Om* in the region between the eyebrows 6-12 times.

You can contract the anal and the abdominal muscles and draw the abdominal muscles in slightly so the navel moves inward toward the lumbar center. While holding the breath, return to the starting position and with a long exhalation, visualize sending the warm energy down to the base of the spinal column.

Repeat the procedure with the leg positions reversed and finally repeat the procedure with both legs outstretched. This is one *Maha Mudra*; it requires about 60-80 seconds. *Maha Mudra* is to be practiced three times.

Note 1

This *Mudra* must be comfortable and it must not hurt! Initially, most *kriyabans* will not be able to do the forward stretch without risking back or knee injury. To avoid pain or injury, you can keep the outstretched leg bent at the knee until the position feels comfortable!

Note 2

The most serious schools of *Kriya* recommend that for every 12 *Kriya Pranayama*, one should perform one *Maha Mudra* – three remains the minimum number. (To make it clear, those who practice 60 *Kriya Pranayamas* should perform *Maha Mudra* five times, while those who practice 12 or 24 *Pranayamas* should perform it three times.) Unfortunately, having listened to different *kriyabans*, I dare say it would be a miracle if *kriyabans* regularly practiced even the three required repetitions. Others believe they are practicing *Kriya* correctly without ever practicing one single *Maha Mudra*! There is no doubt that if you regularly skip this technique and lead a sedentary life, the spinal column will lose its elasticity. One's physical condition deteriorates over the years and it becomes almost impossible to maintain the correct meditation position for more than a few minutes – that is why *Maha Mudra* is so important for *kriyabans*.

Effects

Maha Mudra incorporates all the three *Bandhas*. When applied simultaneously with the body bent forward and without excessive contraction, it helps one to be aware of both ends of *Sushumna* and produces the feeling of an energetic current moving up the spine. In due course, one will be able to perceive the whole *Sushumna* as a radiant

channel. There are reports of *yogis* having achieved fantastic experiences using only this technique. According to their accounts, the perception of *Sushumna* has increased tremendously. There are *kriyabans* who have set aside all the other *Kriya* techniques and practiced 144 *Maha Mudra* in two sessions daily. They consider *Maha Mudra* the most useful among all *Kriya Yoga* techniques.

Insignificant details

I have noticed that some schools insist on uninfluential details. For example they insist that when you extend the right leg in front, you must bend the left leg under the body so the left heel is as near as possible to the perineum. Then the left heel exerts pressure on the perineum. This pressure is of course a means of stimulating one's awareness of the *Muladhara Chakra* in the coccyx region at the root of the spine. [Of course when you extend the left leg, it is the right heel to create pressure.]

Another example is when some schools suggest drawing the knee (or both knees, before the third movement) against the body so the thigh is as close to the chest as possible during inhalation. They recommend that the interlocked fingers are placed around the knee to exert pressure on it. They say that this helps to keep the back straight and make the inner sound of the *Anahata Chakra* audible.

Another detail is this. As we have seen, in the outstretched position, the big toe is grasped with firmness. Some schools insist on this detail: the toenail of the right (left) big toe is squeezed with the thumb of the right (left) hand; the index and middle fingers are behind it. The left (right) hand cups the sole of the foot. When the procedure is repeated with both legs outstretched, both toes are grasped with the interlocked hands.

NAVI KRIYA (*three variations*)

For a lot of people this technique is boring and they jump it. In effects it is not strictly necessary. It will be when a particular teaching will be faced in the so-called *Higher Kriyas*, precisely: the *Advanced Form of Thokai*. I have found three variations of *Navi Kriya* and I deem it useful to introduce them so that the reader has a possibility of choice.

Navi Kriya. First variation – the most common

Forget the breath, let it be natural.

Rest the chin on the throat cavity. *Om* is chanted 100 – aloud or mentally – times in the navel region. The chin is then raised as much as possible and *Om* is chanted approximately 25 times in the third *Chakra Manipura*. This

is one *Navi Kriya*. Practice four *Navi Kriyas*.

In this exercise, if you like, the hands can be involved. With the fingers interlocked, palms face downward, pads of both thumbs touching, the thumbs lightly press the navel for each *Om*. When the chin is then raised the hands are kept behind the back and joined by interlocking the fingers with the palms facing upward. For every *Om*, the thumbs apply a light pressure to the lumbar vertebrae. This technique is repeated four times.

Navi Kriya. Second variation – the most beautiful and useful

This variation envisages a remarkable work upon *Dantian*. The *Dantian* can be visualized as a ball about one and one-half inches in diameter. Its center is located about one and one-half inches below the belly button and about two and one-half inches inside. Focusing the awareness inside the *Dantian* is something fantastic. This variation of *Navi Kriya* rivets the attention in a way that no other variation is able to produce. Its smooth shifting of energy along the circumference of the head has an effect without parallel.

How to practice. The chin is brought down toward the throat cavity. You have a short inhalation (two seconds maximum, without concentrating on the *Chakras*) followed by a very long exhalation during which the energy is felt descending from the frontal part of the brain, along a path outside the body to the navel, reaching through it the *Dantian* region. During this long exhalation, *Om* is chanted mentally, rapidly, 10-15 times, accompanying the descent of energy throughout the path. After a short pause in the *Dantian*, the head resumes its normal position.

A short inhalation draws the energy into the head again. Now each detail is repeated but the descent of the energy happens through a different path. The head bends but not in the front: it bends toward the *left* shoulder, without turning the face. A long exhalation (with the same chanting of *Om*, *Om*, *Om*...) accompanies the downward movement of energy which starts from the brain's left side and moves along a path outside the body at its left side (as if shoulder or arm would not exist). The energy comes down to the waist, cross it and moves toward the *Dantian*.

The head moves back into its normal position. After a short inhalation, the head bends backwards. A long expiration (with the same chanting of *Om*, *Om*, *Om*...) accompanies the downward movement of energy which starts from the occipital region and moves (outside the body) down to the waist where it bends, pierces the third *Chakra Manipura* and moves toward the

inside of the abdominal region (*Dantian*). The procedure is repeated likewise on the *right* side.

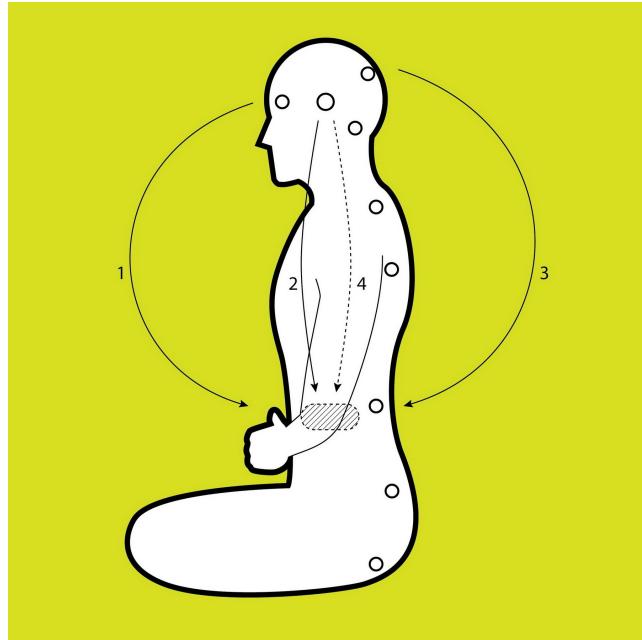


Figure 3. The energy enters the *Dantian* along four directions

The last exhalation concludes a mini cycle of four exhalations accompanied by four descents of energy towards the waist and, crossing it, towards the region of the *Dantian*. This mini cycle is repeated 9 times. In conclusion we have had $4 \times 9 = 36$ descents of energy. What we have described lasts 8-10 minutes and is equivalent to 4 repetitions of the basic form of *Navi Kriya*.

Navi Kriya. Third variation – nice

Visualize a tiny cord that comes out from the point between the eyebrows bends slightly and goes down to the navel.

The procedure consists in mentally chanting the *Om Mantra* in alternation between the point between the eyebrows and the navel. Precisely, when it comes natural to have an inhalation, inhale, visualize the movement of air rising, through the visualized duct, from the navel to the point between the eyebrows, pause an instant there just chant *Om* mentally. When it comes natural to exhale, exhale, visualizing the movement of air going down into the navel, pause and chant *Om* mentally in the navel. By repeating this, you will markedly feel that your breath begins to subside and disappear.

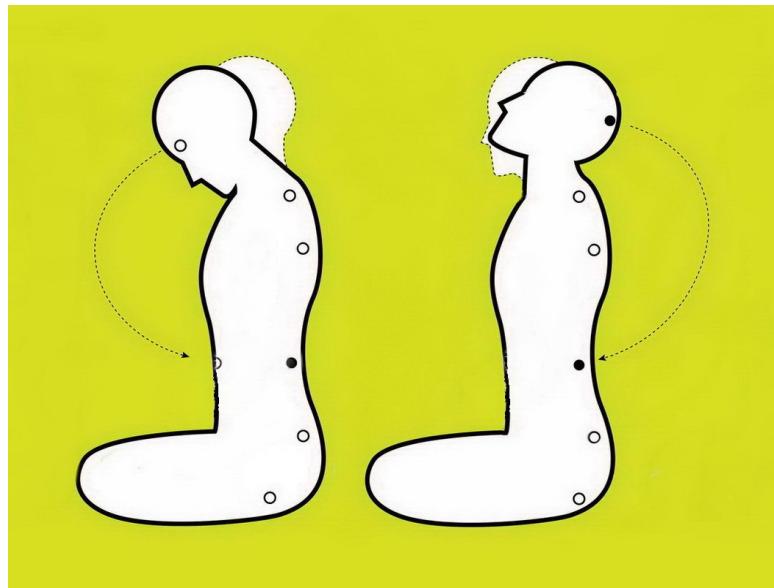


Figure 4. Simple form of *Navi Kriya*

When *Om* is chanted about 100 times, bend your head backwards and repeat a similar procedure by chanting *Om* in alternation between the *Bindu* and the third *Chakra*. Visualize another cord that connects (outside your body) the *Bindu* to the third *Chakra*. Let your breath – if there is still a trace of breath – flow freely through that cord. When *Om* is chanted about 25 times, resume the chin's normal position. This is one *Navi Kriya*. The optimum is to have 4 cycles of *Navi Kriya*.

YONI MUDRA

After a deep *Kriya* inhalation, having drawn the energy up to the central part of the head, close the ears with the thumbs, the eyelids with the index fingers, the nostrils with the middle fingers, the lips with the ring and the little fingers. Hold your breath while mentally repeating *Om* several times and observe any light in the point between the eyebrows. Hold the breath as long as is comfortable. Both elbows are parallel to the floor and pointing out to the side. Do not let them drop, prop them up somehow, if necessary.

During this special light-witnessing act, the index fingers must not put any pressure on the eyes – this would be harmful and serve no purpose! You can draw the eyelids down with the index fingers and apply pressure on the upper cheekbones at the corners of the eyes. When you feel that you need to breathe, exhale and bring the awareness down along the spine. *Yoni Mudra* is usually performed only once.

After *Yoni Mudra*, remain concentrated as long as possible at the point between the eyebrows trying to perceive the light in *Kutastha*. Then open your eyes and stare at what is before you but do not observe anything in particular. Watch without watching. After a while you will become aware of a subtle line of white Light, softened, as a fog, around all objects. The Light will become progressively white and greater. Avoid thinking. Keep the gaze fix. After 5 minutes close your eyes and rest for awhile before standing.

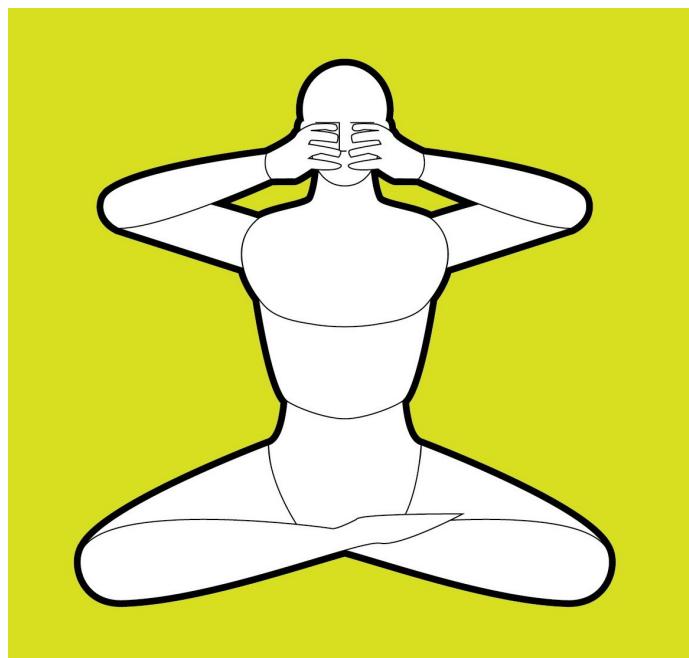


Figure 5. Yoni Mudra

The fundamental instruction is to increase the number of repetitions of *Om* repetitions (while holding the breath) by one per day up to a maximum of 200. It is recommended to avoid forcing. But how it is possible to achieve these results without forcing? In my opinion this ability can be achieved only in time, especially after a confrontation with the *Thokar* procedure. For the present moment I share a simple remedy that can reduce the discomfort of a long *Kumbhaka*.

At the end of a moderate inhalation (not a typical *Kriya Pranayama* one but a shorter one), a *kriyaban* fully plugs all the head openings except the nostrils, exhales a very small quantity of air, then immediately closes the nostrils. The thoracic muscles are to be relaxed as if one intended to begin a new inhalation: this will give the sensation that the breath has become quiet in the area between the throat and the point between the eyebrows. In

this situation, the repetition of *Om* several times while concentrating on the point between the eyebrows can be enjoyed to its fullest.

Remark

You have read that this technique is to be practiced only at night, at the end of your routine. You can actually practice it anytime! However the technique is best done in the deep calmness of the night, when silence is all around and one is totally and perfectly relaxed. *Yoni Mudra* generates such a concentration of energy at the point between the eyebrows that the quality of the ensuing sleep changes for the better. In other words, after crossing the subconscious layers, your awareness may succeed in reaching the so-called "super conscious" state.

DIFFERENT WAYS TO CONCEIVE A KRIYA ROUTINE

Now, having all these techniques, how can you conceive a good *Kriya* routine? There are different possibilities.

I bring here only three examples. [The discourse will be resumed at chapter 12.]

Example 1:

Maha Mudra

K. Pranayama

Navi Kriya

Mental Pranayama

Example 2:

Maha Mudra

Navi Kriya

K. Pranayama

Mental Pranayama

Example 3:

K. Pranayama (only 12)

Maha Mudra

Navi Kriya

K. Pranayama again

Mental Pranayama

I counsel to practice *Yoni Mudra* a part: this technique is so delicate that if not practiced in a perfect way, risks to ruin all the meditative experience.

DEFINITION OF INCREMENTAL ROUTINE

An unvarying schedule which consists of a daily practice of the same set of *Kriya* techniques, changing neither their order of practice nor the number of their repetitions, seems the best way of starting on the *Kriya* path. For the first three months, there is no valid substitute for that. But, if after a couple of years of patient application of the same routine, you would discover that your efforts had been totally ineffective and the initial enthusiasm got lost, you have the opportunity to be reborn to the spiritual path by utilizing your time in a different way.

I know full well that if you address to a dogmatic *kriyaban* you would receive the standard reprimand: "You depend too much on results. Even if you deem that *Kriya* does not work, be loyal to it and go ahead undeterred as you have done up to now." Perhaps he will tell you the story of that loyal *kriyaban* who had his first spiritual experience a day before dying!

I never had doubts that one should continue the practice of *Kriya* through seemingly unproductive phases. Yet a lot of *kriyabans* drop everything. They reach a standstill where further progress appeared impossible. The idea of practicing *Kriya* daily during their entire life because of a promise made at the moment of initiation had become a nightmare, a cage from which they want to escape.

Definition

An *Incremental Routine* consists in utilizing only one technique, whose number of repetitions is gradually increased up to reach a large number of repetitions whose amount has been handed down from *Kriya* tradition. You practice only once in a week.

Let us consider what happens in athletics. I know that *Kriya* is not a sport, but in the beginning stages of *Kriya*, while applying its different psycho-physical techniques, it has many points in common with the essence of athletics. Both shun the employment of brute force, and both require goals and the diligent channeling of one's strength to achieve them. Both also require analyzing and evaluating one's performance to learn from the experience.

Now, what happens in athletics gives us a good example of how to progress. Athletes who wish to achieve excellent performance must somehow increase the intensity and the quality of their practice. Only through intensive training sessions where athletes push their physical and mental endurance beyond their normal levels, will they succeed in

accomplishing otherwise unachievable levels of performance. This is a "law" no one escapes. It is clear that each session should be followed by some days of rest in order to have a full recovery.

INCREMENTAL ROUTINE OF NAVI KRIYA

On Saturdays – or on any free day – after a short practice of *Maha Mudra* and of *Kriya Pranayama*, practice the double number of your usual practice of *Navi Kriya*. It is wise to choose the most beautiful variation of *Navi Kriya*, the one whose process begins with 36 descents to the *Dantian*. You start by practicing $36 \times 2 = 72$ descents. The next steps are: 36×3 , 36×4, 36×19 , 36×20 . There is no need to go beyond 36×20 repetitions. You will do these fundamental steps once per week. What would you do during the other days of each week? The answer will astonish you: "Do nothing or have a very short practice of *Kriya*.

The increase of this delicate *Kriya* technique should be gradual. If you try to outsmart the process and perform too many repetitions all at once, nothing will come of it because the inner channels close up. Our inner obstacles cannot be removed in one day; our inner force is not strong enough to dissolve them. This internal power is initially weak and must be enhanced week after week. Furthermore, this process should be incorporated within a regular active life.

If you always practice in your room, arrange to have a tranquil walk in the evening. Everything will proceed harmoniously and the benediction of blissful silence will unfailingly visit you. The following day, grant yourself a day of rest from all *Kriya* practices and grant yourself the balm of a long tranquil *Japa*.

It is up to you to make your practice days as pleasant as possible. It is advisable to break these long sessions into two parts – to be completed before going to bed. You can conclude each part by lying on your back (*Savasana*: the corpse pose) on a mat for a couple of minutes. You may complete the first part unhurriedly in the morning, carefully respecting every detail. In the afternoon, after a light meal and a little nap, it is fine to go out, find a pleasant place to sit, and then reserve some time to contemplate nature. Then you can complete the remaining prearranged number of repetitions, absorbed in your practice and perfectly at ease. You will see how the effects increase as daylight approaches twilight.

Effects of this practice

A good effect of this practice is a striking increase in mental clarity, probably due to the strong action on the third *Chakra* which governs the thinking process. A more calibrated, precise and clear logical process rises from a more efficient synergy between thoughts and emotions. Intuition flows unimpeded when important decisions are to be made.

Unfortunately, traits of hardness might appear sometimes in your temperament. You will find yourself uttering statements that others find offensive and cutting but that for you, in that moment, are the expression of sincerity. Although sustained by a luminous internal intuition, you might hurt friends through your words and only hours later, being alone and detached, notice how those words were inappropriate.

To understand the reason for this problem, let us look into the meaning of "crossing" the knot of the navel. (*Navi Kriya* is done primarily for this reason and secondarily to unite *Prana* and *Apana* and attract them into the spine.) It is explained that the cutting of the umbilical cord at birth splits a unique reality into two parts: the spiritual and the material. The spiritual, which manifests as joy and calmness, establishes itself in the higher *Chakras* and in the head; the material establishes itself in the lower *Chakras*. This split between "matter" and "spirit" inside each human being is a permanent source of excruciating conflicts. The healing of this fracture happens through this *Incremental Routine*. Although the healing is harmonious, visible manifestations can be interpreted negatively by others.

The personality of a *kriyaban* is destined to be ideally collected around a central point and all inner conflicts healed. The effects are observed clearly in one's practical life. One feels an inward order settling; each action seems as if it were surrounded by a halo of calmness and headed straight for the goal. It reminds me of Ahab in "Moby Dick" by Herman Melville:

Swerve me? ye cannot swerve me, ... The path to my fixed purpose is laid with iron rails, whereon my soul is grooved to run. ... Naught's an obstacle, naught's an angle to the iron way! (*Herman Melville*)

This practice will transform the quality of your breath

When you practice more than 36x4 *Navi Kriyas*, the movements of the head become less marked. The head movements tend to be hardly noticeable. In other words, the forward, backward, and sideways movement of the chin is reduced to a couple of millimeters! This happens spontaneous because the practice is internalized.

At the same time what happens to your breath is remarkable!

At the very moment the order to exhale has been imparted by the mind, it feels as if the lungs cannot move. Some instants later comes the awareness of something subtle descending into the body. A new kind of exhalation is enjoyed, like an internal all-pervading pressure. It brings about a peculiar feeling of well-being, harmony, and freedom. One has the impression one could remain like that forever. Logic implies that breath is coming out of the nose, yet you would swear it doesn't. This may be considered the first experience of *Pranayama with internal breath* (also called *Kriya of the cells*) that we are going to discuss in Chapter 16

INCREMENTAL ROUTINE OF KRIYA PRANAYAMA

Let us first reply to an obvious question: "Why should one practice the Incremental Routine of *Navi Kriya* before that of *Kriya Pranayama*?" The reason is that *Navi Kriya* creates that solidity that permits to face such a challenging procedure such as the *Incremental Routine* of *Kriya Pranayama* is.

Ok, let us introduce this routine. 36x1, 36 x 2, 36 x 3, up to 36 x 20 *Kriya Pranayama* breaths is the best plan. 24x1, 24 x 2, 24 x 3,....24 x 24 is a lighter plan, however very good also.

In Chapter 6 we have shown different aspects of *Kriya Pranayama*, let them all be present. Start with the simplest details and after some time, introduce the others. When the practice is broken into two or three parts – for example between morning and afternoon – you always restart reconsidering the simplest aspects.

Move forward prudently. Respect the rhythm of the breath suited to your constitution. If you feel that your breath is too short, don't worry about it! However, during each stage of the process it is important to keep a slender thread of breath up to the completion of the prescribed number. In other words, the process should never become purely mental. If you like it, make

use of the 12 letter *Mantra* "Om Namo Bhagabate Vasudevaya" (Om Na Mo Bha Ga Ba coming up and Te Va Su De Va Ya coming down.) This helps you to keep the breath not too much short.

Note 1

During this very delicate period, you can practice *Nadi Sodhana Pranayama* both during your week and especially the same day of the Incremental Routine. You can take advantage of this useful technique although it is not part of *Kriya Yoga*. As I have already pointed out, *Nadi Sodhana Pranayama* is far more important than expert *kriyabans* are willing to admit. Its practice should always be coupled with the basic techniques of *Kriya Yoga*. Thanks to it, a beginner receives a dramatic transformation – many important patterns of energy imbalance disappear. Without this balancing action it is not easy to achieve a *watchful but peaceful alertness*, which is the basis itself of the *Kriya* meditative state. It is a common experience that after a long practice of *Nadi Sodhana* without adding any other technique you enter a natural meditative state.

Note 2

Don't be upset if on some occasions this routine becomes an extraordinary journey in your memory. It happens indeed that by focusing your attention on the *Chakras* you obtain a particular effect: the inner screen of your awareness begins to display a lot of images. This is a physiological fact and we have reasons to suspect that those who affirm they are exempt from such phenomenon, it is because they do not have enough lucidity to notice it. The *Chakras* are like jewel boxes containing the memory of our whole life and they give rise to the full splendor of lost reminiscences. The essence of past events (the beauty contained in them and never fully appreciated) is lived again in the quiet pleasure of contemplation while, sometimes, your heart is pervaded by a restrained cry. It is a revelation: the light of the Spirit seems to twinkle in what seemed to be trite moments of your life.

Other incremental routines

We can conceive different *Incremental Routines*. Each technique practiced in intensive way, will arouse specific effects – perceived in particular the day following the practice. Some effects can rouse concern. [A *kriyaban* should have familiarity with the laws of the human psyche.]

If you want to practice an *Incremental routine* of whatever technique and you have not an expert by you to help you in planning the number of repetitions, remember this criterion:

the first step should take 15-20 minutes, then, week by week, go ahead increasing the number of repetitions until you practice for about six hours.

KECHARI MUDRA

To get *Kechari Mudra* we practice *Talabya Kriya* which is described below:

- ***Talabya Kriya***

Start with the tongue in a relaxed position with the tip lightly touching the back of the upper teeth. Press the body of the tongue against the upper palate to create a suction cup effect. DON'T TURN YOUR TONGUE BACKWARDS!

When you have created the suction-cup effect, lower the bottom jaw until you clearly feel the stretch in the *lingual frenulum* (the small fold of tissue under the tongue that attaches it to the base of the mouth.) Release the tongue with a clicking sound then stick it out of the mouth and point it toward the chin. At the beginning, do not exceed 10 repetitions a day to avoid straining the *frenulum*. Eventually, you will do 50 repetitions in about 2 minutes (110-120 seconds.)



Figure 6. Key part of *Talabya Kriya*

Some do not understand immediately how to make their tongue adhere to the upper palate before opening the mouth and stretching the *frenulum*. Sometimes, even when they are shown in person, they are still not able to do it correctly. Many practice *Talabya Kriya* incorrectly by instinctively turning their tongue backwards. The main mistake is concentrating too much on where to place the tip of the tongue. The suction effect is obtained with the whole body of the tongue: the tip of the tongue should be relaxed.

Note

The technique of the *Talabya Kriya* can be enriched by massaging both the muscles of the tongue and the frenulum with one's own fingers. Lahiri Mahasaya was absolutely against cutting the frenulum to obtain faster and easier results. In *Hatha Yoga* books there are different suggestions for lengthening the *frenulum*. One which is well known one is wrapping a piece of cloth around the tongue and, with the help of the hands, gently pulling (relaxing and repeating different times) the cloth both horizontally and also up, toward the tip of the nose.

I hope that it is clear that *Talabya Kriya* and *Kechari Mudra* are completely different! Open your mouth in front of a mirror during the first part of *Talabya Kriya* to see the hollow parts on each side of the *frenulum* which appear isolated from the body of the tongue; during *Kechari Mudra*, it is the uvula that comes forward and only the root of the tongue is visible!

Talabya Kriya is a technique that besides its utility to achieve *Kechari Mudra*, creates a perceivable relaxing effect on the thinking process. Therefore *Talabya Kriya* should not be considered a simple lingual frenulum stretching process. When the tongue sticks to the palate and the mouth is opened, in that instant the energetic split between our body and the reserve of static *Prana* located in the upper part of our head is momentarily healed. This introduces you, in the best of the ways, into the meditation state. Even after mastering *Kechari Mudra*, *Talabya Kriya* should continue to be practiced because it creates a perceivable relaxing effect on the thinking process. It is not known why stretching the *frenulum* reduces thought production, however, anyone practicing the technique can readily verify this.

Oddly enough, *Talabya Kriya* doesn't require concentrating on anything, it is purely physical. Just as an attempt to justify this, we can say that merely pressing the tongue against the upper palate and maintaining the suction effect on the palate for 10-15 seconds, can, in and of itself, generate sensitivity in the *Medulla* area in a very short time. The detail of extending the tongue plays an important part too. When the tongue is fully extended, it pulls on some cranial bones and leads to decompression of the whole area.

• *Check if you are near to Kechari Mudra*

After several months of regular practice of *Talabya Kriya*, it is counseled to check how much you are near to *Kechari Mudra*. The test is whether the tip of the tongue can touch the uvula, utilizing the fingers to push the base of the tongue inward. If the tip of the tongue touches the uvula, then for some minutes a day, try to push with more force the basis of the tongue inward

until the tip goes beyond the uvula and touches the pharynx behind it.

One day, the tip of the tongue will enter a centimeter or so into the nasal pharynx but slip out when the fingers are removed. But, after some more days, on removing the fingers, the tip of the tongue will remain "trapped" in that position.

This is the turning point. The soft palate (the part from which the uvula hangs) acts like an elastic band and creates a hook. This prevents the tongue from slipping out. By striving each day to practice at least 6-12 *Kriya Pranayama* with the tongue in this position – despite some discomfort such as an increase in salivation and occasional swallowing – the practice of *Kechari Mudra* becomes easy and comfortable. After about three weeks of practicing in this way, you should be able to reach the same position without using the fingers. The tongue will be able to insert itself into the nasal-pharynx cavity. There will still be enough space left in the cavity to inhale and exhale through the nose.



Figure 7. Position of the tongue when you enter the nasal-pharynx

Kriya literature affirms that the tongue can be pushed even farther up. Any good anatomy book will reveal that the tongue cannot extend any farther when it fills up the nasal pharynx. That assertion should therefore be understood as a hint to what a normal person thinks is happening. Actually, by extending the tongue to its limit, it is possible to experience a great attraction toward the region between the eyebrows along with the sensation of having reached, with the tip of the tongue, a higher position.

- ***First effects of Kechari Mudra***

During the first three weeks of *Kechari Mudra*, you experience "dizziness" and fogged up mental faculties. Be prepared for this eventuality and consider abstaining from driving and any work involving a significant proportion of risk during this time.

Kechari Mudra has a remarkable effect upon the state of our mind. When you become stable in this *Mudra*, you will notice a quieting of all useless, unwanted thoughts. The internal chatter ceases; silence and transparency become the features of one's consciousness. The mind works in a more restrained way and enjoys an essential rest; each thought becomes more concrete and precise.

After several months of tireless practice, your tongue will reach the junction of the nasal passage inside the hole in the palate. The soft tissue above the holes in the internal part of the nostrils is alluded to in *Kriya* literature as the "uvula above the uvula". The tip of the tongue reaches this small area and remains "stuck" there comfortably.

Necessity of Kechari Mudra to practice the higher Kriyas

Kriya literature affirms that *Kechari Mudra* is decisive to receive initiation into the *Higher Kriyas*. There is nothing unusual that a *Kriya* teacher wants the student's mouth opened in front of them and see the tongue disappear into the nasal pharynx.

However great the effect of *Kechari Mudra*, I firmly believe it is important but not indispensable. The affirmation that I have often heard – Until one is established in *Kechari Mudra*, one cannot achieve the state of "Eternal Tranquility" – is FALSE!

We cannot conceive that the achievement of *Kechari* creates a sharp division among people. Confined to a lower class are those poor little fellows who will never get the *Higher Kriyas* just because they don't succeed in realizing something physical that doesn't depend on their efforts but on their constitution. They will never succeed in speeding up their spiritual path like those *kriyabans* that nature has endowed with a longer bridle or with a nasal pharynx more accessible to the tip of the tongue... the whole idea is absurd.

P.Y.'s decision to allow initiation into the *Higher Kriyas* to those unable to practice *Kechari Mudra* should have our full praise. Considering Lahiri Mahasaya's attitude to partake of our imperfection and suffering, I believe he too behaved similarly.

CHAPTER 8

A WONDERFUL WAY OF PRACTICING KRIYA PRANAYAMA

Technique of Kriya Pranayama as it was explained by Sri Rangin Mukherjee

The *Kriya Pranayama* as taught by Sri Mukherjee has been the best discovery in the field of *Kriya* since my initiation into *Kriya* in 1975. Sri Mukherjee is a nice person, a very likeable and open-hearted *yogi*. He is well-intentioned. He told me a thing that nobody had ever told: "I don't want to leave this body allowing that this original *Kriya* dies with me." He really wants to do something practical in this direction.

At the present moment he asked me to communicate his *First Kriya* to every sincerely interested person. This communication can happen verbally but also through written material posted on my web site (like this Chapter.) He has not asked me (as others did) to erase from my book all the different *Kriya* techniques I learned in the past from other teachers. Although he said they are not original *Kriya*, they represent my past, my toilsome search and should remain. I think that this kind of respect is rare.

Therefore I start this *Chapter* describing his way of practicing the *Kriya Pranayama* technique. The thought of Sri M. is that people who study this technique can practice it while waiting for the opportunity of being formally initiated.

Introduction

The technique of *Kriya Pranayama* is practiced to enter *Sushumna*. In order to enter it, you need to make the breath extremely subtle. Actually, you can enter *Sushumna* only by behaving with extreme delicacy. This happens when, during *Kriya Pranayama*, your inner gaze and all your attention are fixed in the central point of the spiritual eye between your eyebrows and not in any other place! This point is *Kutastha*. Therefore, put your whole attention there. Be mindful of avoiding any strain on the eyes. Everything should stay natural.

Many try to raise the energy in *Sushumna* with force, in a coarse way. In this situation, *Kundalini* does not move upwards but is dispersed and burned in the body; this may create diseases because initially the *Nadis* are

partially blocked. Your *Kriya Pranayama* will produce only stress. Many endeavor to produce the sound in the throat since the beginning and create a strong visualization of the energy that comes up and down: this is not correct.

Therefore, I repeat, we must start in an extremely simple way and proceed without expecting striking results. But then, at a certain point, something profound and meaningful will happen.

As for *Kechari Mudra*, the baby *Kechari* is enough for now – baby *Kechari* is to hold the tip of the tongue up, touching the soft part of the palate.

Main instruction

By keeping both the shoulders in a natural position, by expanding the chest a little bit, by bringing the back in a straight position, by lowering gently the chin, by mentally gazing between the two eyebrows, the position becomes steady effortlessly. Do not cross the eyes, simply set yourself in the point between the eyebrows as if this were a cave where you take shelter.

Have a deep, natural breath.⁵ Chant mentally *Om* six times in *Kutastha* during inhalation and six times during exhalation.

Unlike other forms of *Kriya*, during this initial part you don't put *Om* in the physical seat of each *Chakra*. Rather you don't feel the body at all. You breath doesn't require effort – therefore you don't make any sound in the throat. Perhaps this will seem to you not a correct way of practicing *Kriya*, but please practice this way, this is what Lahiri Mahasaya and Swami Pranabananda Giri instructed.

If your breath is very short, accept this situation without trying, with uneasiness, to lengthen your breath. A longer breath will appear spontaneously in time. What matters is to stay focused at *Kutastha* with the mental chant of *Om*. So, while you are inhaling or exhaling you "knock" at the door of *Kutastha* by chanting 6 + 6 *Oms*.

The recommended number of breaths is 108 and therefore (if you don't fall asleep, if are not disturbed by external events) at the end you shall have mentally chanted the syllable *Om* $12 \times 108 = 1296$ times.

⁵ In this situation "deep breath" means: "Deep as much as you can easily mentally chant six + six *Oms*.

Knocking with *Om* at *Kutastha* will give you the power to mentally touch the central point of each *Chakra* – this event happens spontaneously, so don't try to anticipate it through complicated visualizations. This event happens because the the sixth *Chakra Ajna* governs everything: it gives you an alignment with all the *Chakras*.

When, while inhaling and exhaling, you mentally chant *Om* the prescribed number or times in the central point of *Kutastha* and this subtle action happens also in each *Chakra*, automatically – even if you are not aware of this fact.

There is only a sphere of Light in *Kutastha* and all happens there. You, your body, your spine, everything is there. By going ahead, the exercise becomes more and more pleasant.

In time [if it doesn't happen today, it will happen tomorrow: it needs to have patience and to encourage the right attitude] you will feel that the spine exists, that it is possible to perceive it in all its length. There is nothing in particular you do. Don't try to obtain this by moving your awareness down in the body. Everything happens automatically.

Meanwhile you notice that the breath is slower and also the mental chant of the various *Oms* is more calm and pleasant. At a certain point you will feel that the six *Chakras* exist. It is not that sure that to our internal vision the traditional spinal column with the six *Chakras* will appear. There are so many ways to feel the existence of the *Chakras*.

At a certain point you will realize that the mental chants of *Oms* in *Kutastha* are happening in the center of each *Chakra* too. But remember that your attention is always at the central point of the spiritual eye. If your focus is diverted from *Kutastha*, all the magic of this process is lost.

At a certain moment you will notice that the breath is accompanied by a delicate sound in the throat. It is the sound of the friction of the air in the throat. In this way the breath becomes slow and subtle. In time the sound of the exhalation reminds the sound produced by a small flute through which a small amount of air passes. Now don't worry how this sound should be.

If all is happening in the right way, if the calmness is still with you, your breath crosses the *Chakras* from the first to the sixth and from the sixth to the first and in each *Chakra* the syllable *Om* is vibrated. This is a delicious situation. Usually this happens toward the end of the 108 breaths. All your being is situated in a bright sphere placed between *Kutastha* and the center

of your head. It doesn't matter what you see, it matters that you are perfectly comfortable, absorbed in the beauty of the procedure. While you are approaching at the end of the 108 *Kriya* breaths, you might have the experience of the light in *Kutastha*. This will be intensified by *Yoni Mudra*. After *Yoni Mudra* and *Maha Mudra* you will sit again placing yourself in *Kutastha* without doing nothing. In other words without chanting *Om*, and without paying attention to the breath.

Questions and answers

Some *kriyabans* find it difficult to learn how to practice this form of *Kriya Pranayama* because they do no accept the fact that this method is completely different from what they had been practiced before. For example they feel it strange that in the instruction there is no mention of the spinal path. There are many unexpected questions.

Are the breaths uncontrolled like in the *Hong So* technique?

During the *Hong So* technique we observe the spontaneous process of breathing without caring if it is long or short. Indeed during the *Hong So* technique, our breath lasts no more than a couple of seconds. By going ahead with this technique the breath tends to disappear. How can the "*Hong So* breathing" sustain the procedure of *Kriya Yoga* that brings gradually to a slow moving of the current up and down the spine? Surely, there are techniques that blend "*Hong So* breathing" with attention to the spine and to the *Chakras*. But in Lahiri Mahasaya teaching (and we are trying to abide by that dimension) it is stated that in the long run you become able of practicing a very elevated form of *Pranayama*: inhalation and exhalation lengthen up to 22 + 22 seconds. Therefore breathing like *Hong So* has nothing to do with *Kriya Pranayama* as explained by Sri Mukherjee.

In other words: in Sri M.'s *Kriya Pranayama* we utilize a NATURAL breath. But this breath must be slow in order that you have six mental chantings of *Om* while inhaling and six mental chantings of *Om* while exhaling. We must have a breath that can support this mental action. Our breath must go ahead effortlessly but must exist! If we would practice like in the *Hong So* technique, it will be impossible to have it. The breath must be natural but we must care that it gradually lengthens.

If you have a very short breath and therefore you are not able to mentally pronouncing all these *Oms*, chant those *Oms* more quickly. Your breath will lengthen after a short number of breaths.

I would like to know little more about the process of "knocking" with *Om* in *Kutastha*. If we mentally chant *Om*, then at that time we are not having *Kutastha* in mind.

The point is not: "having *Kutastha in mind*" but being there, inside *Kutastha*. The mind is still, the process of thought is not stressed with the idea "I must have *Kutastha* in mind otherwise my practice is wrong" No. Nothing of that. You are occupied with two activities, [1] breathing and [2] putting *Om* repeatedly in the central point of *Kutastha*. That's all. If you do this for some minutes, you enter a paradise. With patience you achieve your divine state of contemplation.

Some persons speculate about the duration of each *Om*, if after each *Om* there is a short pause. They want to know how many micro seconds it lasts... They are free to sophisticate and come to their failure. *Kriya* sometimes might seem a chemical receipt but its nature is that of an art based upon intuition, intelligence, commonsense.

What is the best routine?

108 *Kriya* breaths [Time required: from 40 to 50 minutes] After that, practice *Yoni Mudra* (only once in 24 hours), 3 *Maha Mudra* and then remain calm, focused on *Kutastha*. In this final part you simply enjoy the peace and the bliss originating from the practice of *Kriya*.

Sri Mukherjee explains clearly that even a beginner can start right away doing the full 108 repetitions. There is no lower number to begin with, there is no recommended progression. Of course if one is ill, he does not practice at all. And if one, due to circumstances beyond their control, can practice only an inferior number, well, this may happen but it should not become the rule. About other numbers found in the letters written by Lahiri to his disciples, we must understand that those letters represent very personal instructions. Here we are considering a general counsel given to serious kriyabans in a good condition of health.

As for *Maha Mudra* there is a variation recommended by Sri Mukherjee for those who find *Maha Mudra* too difficult. "Lie down on the back. Inhale. Raise the legs maintaining the pelvis on the floor. Join the hands under the knees. Keep your equilibrium on the inferior bones of the pelvis and keep the forehead near the knees. Exhale. Return to the initial position."

Alternative practice to conclude your practice of Kriya Pranayama.

When the breath is internalized inside *Sushumna*, keep attention at

Kutastha. With natural breathing pull one inhalation into *Sushumna* with only one mental chant of *Om* and exhale with another *Om*. Practices like this until you forget yourself and reach the stage of *Samadhi*.

In the correspondence of Lahiri with his disciples, Medulla is often quoted. Has Medulla a role?

What I now describe is a "subtlety" that is discovered in time.

Practice as I describe: keep the chin some millimeters down and inside in a way that *Kutastha* and *Medulla* are at the same level. Realize that you exist in the *Medulla* while it is only the visual strength that is focused in the point between the eyebrows. Not only that, realize that every manifestation, that every luminous revelation of the *Chakras* happens about four centimeters inward from the point between the eyebrows: the seat of *Ajna*.

What I say seems perhaps complicated to you but, believe me, while you are practicing, breath after breath everything becomes clearer.

How can I know when comes the right moment to produce the sounds in the throat?

It is typical of *Kriya schools* to teach you how to produce strong sounds in the throat since the beginning of the practice. They explain that strong sounds in the beginning are ok because they produce cold and warm sensations in the spine. Sri Mukherjee explains that these sensations happen but they are produced by the *Ida* and *Pingala* currents. These currents have nothing to do with being in *Sushumna*. If you, since the starting of your *Pranayama*, insist too much upon them, you may cause some problems and lose the magic of the procedure.

Let that throat sounds come later. They will be more enjoyable, will "mesmerize" your concentration and help the procedure. The sounds appear spontaneously when the breath is sufficiently long. Only meditation born intuition can help you to understand when it is good you try to increase the force of your breath and produce the sounds.

Why in the main document posted on the download page it is written: "after entering the Sushumna you have to use force on Pranayama."

This is a hint to the *Second Kriya* stage. It may happen that before ending 108 *Kriyas* breaths you are in *Sushumna*. It might happen that at a certain moment you will feel that the veil of darkness fades away and you witness the brilliance of the Divine Light in the center of which lies the entry point of *Sushumna*. In that wonderful situation you might perceive the color of each *Chakra*.

This is the realm of *Second Kriya* that we will examine later. In this situation it is not necessary to abide by the injunction "Don't overstep the prescribed number: 108." In this case you can go ahead until you enter an ecstatic state and are lost there. Lahiri Mahasaya has said that in this state there is no other instruction to be practiced.

Here ends the explanation of *Kriya Pranayama* as I have heard it from Sri Mukherjee. Now, in the remaining part of this *Chapter*, I add other simple information and considerations

If you already studied chapters 6 and 7, it will not hurt to consider them again.

The reader will wonder: if *Kriya Pranayama* as it is taught by Sri Mukherjee is so beautiful and works so well, what could be the utility of *Kriya Pranayama* as described in Chapters 6 and 7? The answer is that *Kriya Pranayama* requires a continuous improvement. Chapters 6 and 7 can reveal some events that happen when a person practices with great seriousness. In other words those who have fresh in their mind Chapters 6 and 7 won't have any difficulty in perfecting at incredible levels the practice of *Kriya Pranayama*.

I recommend to everyone be inspired by the various aspects of *Kriya Pranayama* as delineated particularly in chapter 6 and couple them with the instructions of Sri Mukherjee: "Never move away from *Kutastha*, always mentally chant 6+6 Oms in the center of *Kutastha*." Of course in order realize this one must have an acute intuition.

THEORETICAL VISION OF THE FOUR LEVELS OF KRIYA

This vision comes from a conversation (and subsequent elaboration) I had with Sri M. It is useful to consider in the right light all the chapters of this second part of the book. Without it, we risk perceiving *Kriya Yoga* as a chaotic a set of techniques – this would lead to leave the *Kriya* practice after some unhappy attempts to devise a rational routine.

Lahiri Mahasaya said that a spiritual path foresees four footsteps in which four internal knots (the *Grantis* mentioned in *Yoga* tradition) are unfastened. They are: tongue, heart, navel, coccyx.

Is this the meaning of the four *Kriya* levels?

First *Kriya* ↔ Opening the knot of tongue
Second *Kriya* ↔ Opening the knot of heart
Third *Kriya* ↔ Opening the knot of navel
Fourth *Kriya* ↔ Opening the knot of *Muladhara*

I'm sorry to say that the answer is negative.

The *First level* (or stage) of *Kriya* cannot be correlated only with the opening of the knot of the tongue: there is so much that happens in the *first stage*. We can say that in the *First level* all the knots are gradually unfastened. As for the *Second level*, surely the knot of the heart receives a great unfastening action but we know that each *Chakra* receives such an action, therefore a different definition is needed. The *Third level* seems more linked with the opening of the knot of *Muladhara* than of the navel. The *Fourth level of Kriya* seems to be beyond knots. But let us consider each step in a better way.

In substance he defines the First level as the stage in which, mainly through *Kriya Pranayama* the *kriyaban* succeeds to enter the channel of *Sushumna* enjoying a particular state in which important internal experiences (like to perceive the light of the *Chakras*) can happen while the perceptions of the external world are very slight or non-existent. The Second level is more mysterious, because Sri M simply says that it consists in "*piercing the Chakras*". The Third level consists in piercing the *Kutastha* while the Fourth level is the spontaneous meditation that happens in the *Sahasrara* – when our awareness is able to enter there.

This subdivision of *Kriya* in 4 levels is useful. Here under I expose my vision that is in tune with that of Sri M, only it is slightly more explicit.

First level. In this stage one tries to master the most important of the procedures of *Kriya Yoga*: the technique of *Kriya Pranayama*. We are occupied in making the breath subtle, thus we can guide consciousness and energy into the subtle channel of *Sushumna*.

When we start the practice of *Kriya Pranayama*, the *Ida* and *Pingala* *Nadis* are partially blocked and the *Prana* has difficulty to flow. They are balanced, purified by *Maha Mudra*. Therefore *Maha Mudra* is essential to start. A good sign that the breath has become "subtle" is that, during the exhalation, we have the sensation that it doesn't go out of the body through the nostrils but travels inside the body reaching its cells.

The obtainment of *Kechari Mudra* is undoubtedly of great utility. Other procedures can turn useful even if they are not practiced in the fullness one of their power. So many things can happen during these years when one is occupied with the first level. An evident sign that one is ready for the Second level is the facility to enter the state of breathlessness.

The Second level of *Kriya* is characterized by a conclusive work upon each *Chakra*. The *Chakras*, when they lie dormant, are like blocks that make us extraneous to the nucleus of our personality. We make radiant and active the energies of the *Chakras*: the alienation with our Self ceases to exists. We can also say that the purpose of this level of *Kriya* is to dissolve the illusory reality of the five *Tattwas* [they are the 5 elements: earth, water, fire, air, ether] becoming able to perceive in each aspect of the physical reality only one substance: the *Spiritual Light*.

In the Second level we distinguish two parts:

First part. We act upon all the *Chakras* during a very deep *Kriya Pranayama* – no *Chakra* in particular receive more attention than the others.

Through a long practice of *Kriya Pranayama* and the application of the procedure of the *Navi Kriya* the two opposite currents of *Prana* and *Apana* dissolve in the *Samana* current. *Kriya Pranayama* is brought ahead but its nature changes. We enter the dimension of the subtle breath. With a pure will power we can drive the *Prana* from the body to the base of the spine and then force it within the spine. In its movement within the spinal channel such current touches with great "mental pressure" every *Chakra*. Perception of different tonalities of light and listening to internal sounds makes the practice of this technique very sweet.

Second part. After this procedure, we act deeply upon a specific part of the spine, lingering there for a long time before moving to a new portion of the spine.

A very well consolidated scheme is the following:

[I]: We work upon *Chakras* 1, 2 and 3 by taking the energy away from *Chakras* 1 and 2 and guiding it inside *Chakra* 3. To achieve this we usually utilize *Mula Bandha* inside *Kriya Pranayama*.

[II]: We work upon *Chakra* 4 alone by taking the energy away from *Chakra* 3 and from *Chakras* 5, 6 and 7 and focusing it on *Chakra* 4. We say that we partially cut the knot of the heart. To achieve this we usually utilize the practice of *Thokai*.

[III]: We work upon *Chakras* 4, 5, 6 and 7 by taking the energy away from *Chakra* 3 and forcing it across *Chakras* 4, 5, 6 and 7. We say that we cut definitively the knot of the heart. To achieve this we usually utilize a particular procedure that is called *Reverse or Inverted breath*. This practice is similar to the practice that the Tibetan yogis call "*Tummo*." After this work, we are ready to pierce the *Rudra* knot in *Kutastha*.

Third level

After the practice of *Reverse breath*, the *Prana* is collected (gathered) in the point between the eyebrows and in the upper part of the head. The strength of the downward attraction, toward the purely material life is weak. It is easy to discover the essence of each *Chakra* in the mirror of *Kutastha*.

To make the veil of illusion less real and therefore to open the door to an inexhaustible spiritual realization it is necessary to go beyond the essence of the *Tattwas*. This happens by intensifying even more the energy in the central point of each *Chakra* and of *Kutastha*.

Here we have different methods to proceed. They can be based upon a subtle form of breathing with long *Kumbhaka* or upon a pure mental effort. In my opinion, the best way, the less problematic and therefore safe is the second one.

Fourth level [I]

Sooner or later, all the obstacles represented by the *Tattwas* are dissolved. The truthful vision is born from such event. By abdicating completely to the association with the first five *Chakras*, the concentration becomes perfect and the mind resides in its natural state. In the region that is physically placed in the higher part of the brain (commonly called "Thousand petal Lotus) where the dimension of the static *Prana* reigns, this vision can be experimented. Lahiri Mahasaya called it "Eternal Tranquility." The heart is full of inexpressible joy. Quality as love, compassion, gentleness, understanding, empathy, and magnanimity manifest.

In this higher state we can develop a last assignment: to reach the dimension of the *Sahasrara* by meditation upon three particular points (*Bama*, *Roudri* and *Jestha*) presents in the superior part of the brain. [These three points correspond to the right lobe of the brain, to the left one and to a point between them placed more aloft. To locate such point, raise the

chin, focus your attention where the divine Light seems to originate.] When the purpose of this meditation is achieved, it follows the attempt to reach the *Brahma Randra* – "the tenth door" which, in this book, is called *Bindu*.

After *Brahma Randra* is reached the descent of the static *Prana* from the *Sahasrara* toward the heart *Chakra* and to all the body happens. The body must learn how to live by pure energy.

Fourth level [II] The breath is totally internalized, therefore you practice *Kriya Pranayama* in the state of breathlessness. This experience, in the "Internal Alchemy" dimension is called "Embryonic breath" or "Great celestial circle."

What you will find in the next chapters

Purpose of the next chapters 9, 10 e 11

We have given a short description of the four levels of *Kriya*. Well, the next three chapters 9, 10 and 11 are devoted to describe how three different schools teach how to realize these levels.

Chapter 9 introduces the reader to the practice of *Thokar* and shows what comes out of it. Since I do not know how to call this school I call it "classic" because it is very spread. In it we find some procedures that reflect very well the texts attributed to Lahiri (letters of Lahiri Mahasaya to his disciples and comments to some holy writings.)

Chapter 10 considers the developments of a particular school that introduces something that other schools do not know: the *Tribhangamurari* experience. Satya Charan Lahiri, grandson of Lahiri Mahasaya, described this experience about fifty years ago. Such teaching is very strange, it is not difficult but it requires a lot of time. It assumes a formidable aspect, very effective, when the *kriyaban* learns to perceive the micro movement *Tribhangamurari* within each *Chakra*.

Chapter 11 is base upon the teaching of *Swami Hariharananda*. In this school the perception of the Divine revealing to our consciousness in the form of sound and luminous vibration and in the form of movement sensation assumes a fundamental role from the first to the last step.

Purpose of Chapter 12

Chapter 12 is based upon my personal experience. Here I draw my conclusions and decide to take into consideration only what is greatly effective. First of all the technique of *Kriya Pranayama 108* is considered inside a very powerful routine. "Powerful" means that those who have practiced *Kriya* for a considerable number of months will, through this routine, experience the breathless state.

The other two routines have been conceived for improving the practice of *Kriya Pranayama* without betraying the principles taught by Sri M. Let me explain what "Improving *Kriya Pranayama*" means by quoting a personal experience.

My Kriya path began some decades ago from a small page of a Hatha Yoga book written by Sri B.K.S. Iyengar . There I found the description of *Ujjayi Pranayama* which, coupled with *Nadi Sodhana*, brought me right to a great experience that changed my life.

But the experience came only when, after some months of practice, I added *Mula Bandha*. This addition was a decision of mine, taken after studying and by listening to my intuition. Then, while lying down in *Savasana* I had the experience of *Kundalini* rising.

Perhaps without my addition of *Mula Bandha* I wouldn't have had the experience in the spine. Without that I don't know where I would be now, what complications I would still be looking for. What I added completed my *Ujjayi*. It didn't modify it. My own intuition said: "add this *Mula Bandha*. Help yourself to perceive the spine!"

It was as if my intuition said – do you want to enter *Sushumna*? Well, then help yourself! Don't wait for miracles. You must strive now, with your intelligence and intuition. Well, what you will find in chapter 12 is an exhortation to work in a powerful, ultimate way.

Purpose of Chapters of the third part of the book

In the third part of the book I try to relate experiences that are well known and very important on the spiritual path like *Devotional Prayer* or *Japa* – unfortunately you receive scant information when you enter a narrow group of *kriyabans*. They insist that you do nothing besides the specific techniques of *Kriya Yoga*. The important chapters are 13 and 14 where you will find some inspiration about the value of *Devotional Prayer*. I resume

the theme introduced in Chapter 3. I try to give and idea of the *Prayer of the heart* – central theme in the practice of the Hesychasm.

I have good reasons to believe that the procedure of the *Prayer of the heart* belongs to *Kriya Yoga*. The path of the *Kriya* doesn't move only upward toward the region of the *Sahasrara*. It necessarily moves toward that place where all the authentic and complete spiritual paths are directed: to create stability of the consciousness in the region of the heart.

After the parenthesis of Chapter 15 (where you are invited to seek inspiration in spiritual traditions similar to the *Kriya*), Chapter 16 shows how the *Kriya Pranayama* may become the process of descent toward the cells of the body. *Kriya Pranayama* can serve to infuse the Divine in the cells of the body. Who practices this will understand that the spiritual path is not only a path of "ascent" but also a path of "descent."

CHAPTER 9

CLASSIC SCHOOL: THOKAR AND ITS DEVELOPMENTS

In the classic school (the most common, the one that probably comes from Sri Panchanon Bhattacharya), the *First level of Kriya* corresponds to what we have learned in chapters 6 and 7. The *Second level* corresponds to the *Elementary form of Thokar*, the *Third level* to the *Advanced form Thokar*. As for the *Fourth Kriya level* there are many doubts.

Elementary form of Thokar

The practice of *Thokar* (both in the elementary form and, for evident reasons, in advanced form, is always preceded by the practice of *Kriya Pranayama* and of *Navi Kriya*.

With the chin resting on your chest, inhale while simultaneously raising your awareness along the spinal column. The syllables of the *Vasudeva Mantra* (*Om Namo Bhagavate Vasudevaya*) are to be placed mentally in each *Chakra* location. Touch each *Chakra* with the first six syllable of the *Mantra* (*Om* is placed in the first *Chakra*, *Na* in the second, *Mo* in the third, *Bha* in the fourth, *Ga* in the fifth and *Ba* in *Bindu*.) Raise the chin as if following the inner movement.

The hands (with interlocked fingers) are placed on the navel area to create a mental pressure on the first three *Chakras*. Contract moderately the muscles at the base of the spine. The breath produces only a slight, weak sound in the throat or it comes out soundless. When the chin is up and horizontal, the inhalation ends, and the awareness is in *Bindu*.

Hold your breath. Hold the muscle contraction at the base of the spine. The head begins its rotation by moving to the left shoulder (left ear moves slightly toward the left shoulder, the face does not turn left or right and the movement is free of all bouncing); *Teeee* is thought in the *Medulla*. The head tilts back a little and in a sweeping arc reaches the right shoulder, (the right ear coming near the right shoulder), the syllable *Va* is thought in the cervical *Chakra*. The rotation proceeds, the head bends forward just a little and moves left until the left ear is near the left shoulder (the face is not turned to the left).

From this position, the chin is tilted down diagonally as if to strike the

center of the chest, while simultaneously *Su* is intensely vibrated in the heart *Chakra*. A kind of hitting is felt in the heart *Chakra*. A short pause follows: just what is needed to be immersed in the radiation of energy emanating from that *Chakra*. The contraction at the base of the spinal column is eased off; via a very subtle exhalation the remaining syllables of the *Mantra* are "placed" in the first three *Chakras* – *De* into the third one, *Va* into the second one, and *Yaaaa* into the first one. While doing this, the head is usually kept down.

If you want to practice with more intensity, at the moment of the strike at the heart *Chakra* with *Su*, while applying all the three *Bandhas* (*Mula*, *Uddiyana*, and *Jalandhara*), continue to hold the breath there for an extra few seconds before exhalation. A warm sensation will be felt around and inside the fourth *Chakra* region.

The duration of this process is about 24 seconds. Repeat the procedure 12 times. Traditionally, one begins with 12 rotations and increases by one every day up to a maximum of 200 repetitions.

Thokar is practiced after *Kriya Pranayama*. The preliminary action of *Kriya Pranayama* is strictly necessary. At the end of this practice pause with the awareness centered both in the heart *Chakra* and in the light manifesting at the point between the eyebrows.

Instead of increasing the number of repetitions of one a day, you can add six repetition per week. In this way it is more easy to remember the number of repetition you are supposed to do. During the first week practice 12 repetitions each day. Then consider the practice of 18 repetitions each day et cetera.

If there are problems, practice this technique every other day. The third week (just to give you an example) you can practice 24 repetitions on alternate days. It is not necessary to practice every day; rather it is wise to work three days a week on the average. When you reach a consistent number of repetitions (more than 60) the effects are very strong. Therefore be very careful.

Note

Do not allow the weight of the head to be the sole force pushing the chin toward the chest: letting your head simply drop would definitely be harmful. A mindful physical effort is needed to lower the chin.

When you practice over 50 repetitions, the movements of the head should be only hinted at: the chin does not come close to the chest and the striking of the fourth *Chakra* is mainly achieved by the sheer power of mental concentration. If you have any difficulty whatsoever, stop and do not try at any cost to reach the 200 repetitions.

The presence of physical problems (the cervical vertebrae are indeed vulnerable) may require practicing on alternate days. It is better to add more cycles over time rather than face the prospect of experiencing continuous head and neck pain throughout the entire day!

Advanced form of Thokar

The *Advanced Form of Thokar* is an acceleration of its elementary form – the action of *Thokar* is repeated while holding the breath. In *Kriya* literature it is explained that the heart knot is struck by the *Elementary Form of Thokar* and then cut by the *Advanced Form*.

Important clarification before describing the Advanced form of Thokar

Consider how we breathe during *Kriya Pranayama*. While we are inhaling we expand the belly; while we are exhaling the belly contracts. Here when we inhale the abdomen contracts, when we exhale the abdomen relaxes. If we want to practice the *Advanced Form of Thokar* in the best way we must learn this way of breathing, otherwise our undertaking ends with fruitless attempts.

Navi Kriya should be practiced before Thokar

How this technique is usually introduced

After inhaling (with *Om, Na, Mo...*) and raising the *Prana* to the upper part of the lungs, partially relax the muscles of the thoracic cage as if you were going to begin a new inhalation. The act of sealing the lungs (trachea) as when diving, should be avoided. In this relaxed mood, repeat numerous cycles of the head movements unhurriedly. Consequently the mental chanting of *Te* in *Medulla*, *Va* in the cervical and *Su* in the heart *Chakra* is done several times (*Te, Va, Su, Te, Va, Su, Te, Va, Su ...*) while holding the breath. Stop the procedure and exhale when feeling discomfort!

Then slowly exhale and place the syllables *De, Va, Ya* in *Chakras* three, two, one respectively. While doing this, keep your head down. This practice is done rigorously once a day.

As for the repetition of *Te, Va, Su, Te, Va, Su...*, as soon as you feel your attention totally focused on the heart *Chakra*, put not only the syllable *Su* but also the two previous ones, *Te* and *Va*, in the heart *Chakra*. From that moment onwards, the syllables *Te, Va* and *Su* are mentally placed only in the heart *Chakra*.

To give an idea of the speed of the movements, the entire process from inhalation to exhalation with 12 repetitions of the rotation of the head (each rotation concluding with the movement of the chin toward the chest) lasts around 70-80 seconds.

Traditionally, one begins with 12 cycles of the head movements unhurriedly during one single breath and increases by one every day up to 200 repetitions. This *Kriya* is considered mastered when one reaches 200 rotations without interrupting the *Kumbhaka* state.

Of course, this is too difficult. At a certain point, during this increasing process, when you cannot go over a certain number of rotations – unless going ahead rotating your head too quickly, which is silly – should you accept your defeat? No, I hope you will consider what I am explaining now.

Alternative explanation

This explanation would seem a desecration, however... it works.

Inhale slowly and steadily through your nose and at the same time pull-in the stomach and lift up the the perineum. While inhaling, mentally repeat *Om, Na, Mo...*and raise the *Prana* to the upper part of the lungs. Then partially relax the muscles of the thoracic cage as if you were going to begin a new inhalation.

Focus your attention on the upper part of your rib cage. A part of this attention goes to the base of the spine. Mentally chant *Om, Om, Om...* rapidly (about two chants of *Om* per second) feeling your awareness like an ant, crawling up the innermost channel of the spine millimeter by millimeter from *Muladhara* upwards.

After no more than 4-6 seconds, you'll have reached the heart *Chakra*; go up further, in the region between the fourth and the fifth *Chakra* (the region related to the upper part of lungs and chest.) You will perceive a real, tangible freedom from the breath. Be sure to feel *Prana* pervade the rib

cage and become calm and stable there.⁶

Well, taking this as a basis, utilize the best attitude you have to reach a real, tangible freedom from the breath. Remain stable in this state, without ever letting the abdomen and the rib cage relax and the *Prana* slide down. In this mental and physical state you practice the *Advance Form of Thokar*. You will discover how beautiful and comforting is the experience of rotating your head (with *Te, Va, Su, Te, Va, Su....*) while the breath seems frozen in the thorax region.

Simplify the dynamic and the physical intensity of the movements. Move the chin toward the chest before completing the head rotation. Namely, after rotating your head from left to right, let your chin "fall" toward the chest from the right side, then lift it to left side and continue with the rotations. By increasing the rotations, the movements of the head should be only hinted at and the chin should not come close to the chest.

When you feel you have neared your limit holding your breath, while keeping the chest expanded and the abdominal muscles and diaphragm contracted and immobile, let a minimal (almost imperceptible) sip of air go out whenever the chin is lowered toward the chest and let an imperceptible sip of air enter whenever the chin is brought up.

Do not do any specific act of inhaling or exhaling: relax and allow the phenomenon we have described to happen of its own accord. The sensation will always be of not breathing at all. Now exhale the air through your mouth and at the same time push out your stomach and let your perineum relaxed.

Note

The counsel of not to practice a perfect *Kumbhaka* is strange, but if you go ahead with this and repeat it a sufficient number of times (usually it's a matter of a couple of months), one day you will make a beautiful discovery: this strategy is no more necessary! Thanks to the effect of this practice upon the ganglia exerting an influence on the central cardio-respiratory mechanisms, the practice happens in better and better conditions, until one day you will be able to complete the 200 rotations without breathing and without hurry. You will experience a state of consciousness characterized by heightened feeling of freedom from physical laws. It is a matter of inner realization – an instinct which is discovered in time.

⁶ The counsel to mentally chanting *Om, Om, Om...* really draws energy in the spine from all the parts of your body and guides it toward the spine. If your body condition is perfect (if you are moderate with eating and your are on an empty stomach) you will notice that your breath is dissolved in some inexplicable way in the body.

When the energetic state created in the abdominal region has fully risen into the heart region you witness the Divine in front of you but somehow distant as within a kind of ideal horizon. You feel It, you recognize It and you feel limitless joy. Your reaction is crying of nostalgic longing. At the end of this *Kriya* practice you will find tears in your eyes.

My worship is of a very strange kind. Holy water is not required. No special utensils are necessary. Even flowers are redundant. In this worship, all gods have disappeared, and emptiness has merged with euphoria. (Lahiri Mahasaya)

Now let us discuss the technique that many consider the "Completion of Thokar": Navi Kundalini

This technique is the "*Vase breathing*" of the *Tibetan Yoga*. I call it "*Navi Kundalini*" because from the *Navi (Dantian)* *Kundalini* raises to reach the upper part of the head.

Practical instruction. Inhale feeling the Prana that enters the body with the coolness of the air. Breath and energy enter through the nostrils, touch the point between the eyebrows, then *Medulla*, then the cervical *Chakra*, the heart *Chakra* and finally the *Dantian* region. Feel the aforesaid points with great clarity. During the inhalation, abiding by the principles of Reversed Breathing, continuously increase the contraction of the abdomen. Intensify the pressure on the whole region of the *Dantian*.

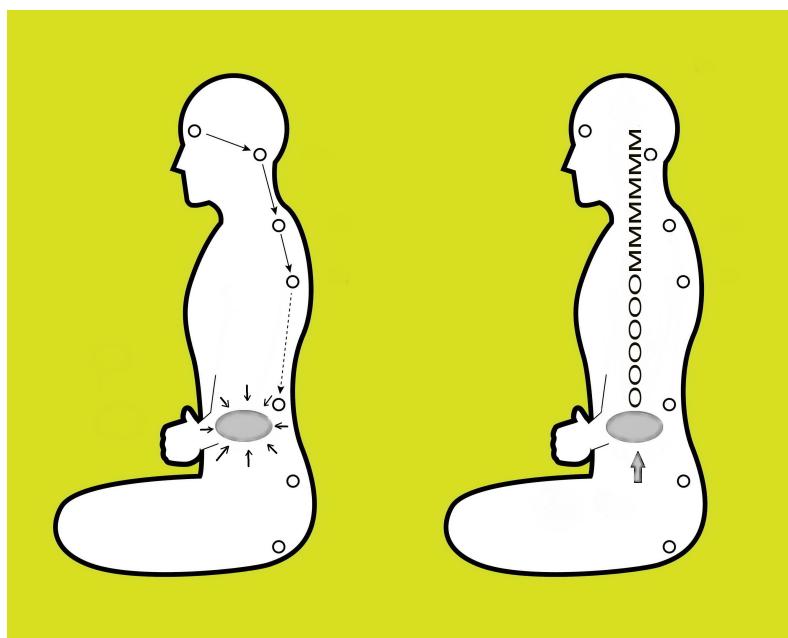


Figure 8. The energy contained in the Dantian is squeezed upwards

While the energy comes down assume gradually the three *Bandhas*: contract the muscles at the base of the spine (*Mula Bandha*), draw inside

the abdominal muscles by contracting them (*Uddiyana Bandha*) and low the chin on the chest (*Jalandhara Bandha*.)

Having completed the inhalation, intensify the pressure is upon the *Dantian* region. Push down gently with your diaphragm in order to firmly compress the energy brought down from above. Keep this pressure for a minimum of 12 tranquil mental chants of *Om*.

Exhale while mentally chanting a long *Oooommm* (the longest *Om* you can) perceiving *Kundalini* and Bliss being pushed upwards. Don't ask whether the movement of *Kundalini* happens inside *Sushumna* or it happens along another channel in the front of the spine. The energy knows where to flow. Repeat the procedure at least 10 times. Feel that *Anahata Chakra* is warm, pervaded by the internal flame.

If you have more time to repeat another ten times: the warm sensation reaches the *Vishuddha Chakra*. After ten more breaths, the warm sensation has reached the middle part of your had. After ten more breaths, the warm sensation has reached *Fontanelle*. The procedure we have described is the best way of making all the effects of *Thokar* be absorbed and expanded in a state of bliss very near to *Samadhi*. All this is a giant step forward in the spiritual path.

Note: effects of intensive practice of Thokar

The most precious effect is the manifestation of a particular joy in the heart as if you moved around with an ardent brazier in your heart. This will develop in a *Bhakti* whose intensity will surprise you. You will learn to practice the presence of God and perform your daily duties in His presence.

Let us deal with emotions because it is upon them that the practice of *Thokar* acts in an admirable way. I have tried to retrace the theme "emotions" in some oriental books and have found so much rhetoric, too many words without practical meaning. They distinguish between positive (affection, happiness, contentment...) and negative (envy, aggressiveness, illusion ...) emotions, but at the end of boring discussions you still have not grasped the essential fact: untamed emotions can create disaster in one's life. We are governed by superficial emotions and instincts that include our religious conditioning, our weak points, our fears, our doubts and our pessimism. It is important to have the ability to keep emotions at bay, going our way even when all the world and even our closest friends are trying to convince us to follow theirs.

We all know how frantic and hysterical emotions often rise unexpectedly from one's inner self, then disappear after a while. They actually express a reality devoid of authentic depth but their propulsive action inevitably results in hurried acts accompanied by a sort of cerebral fever, nourished by a narrow, visceral pleasure. When passion inflames one's whole being, it is not possible to be guided by common sense; the consequence is that our deeper and most earnest choices sometimes withdraw to an irrevocable halt.

Just as during the summer hail stones are molded, condensed and enlarged in the air before falling down to the earth and cause disasters, fatal decisions take shape in advance in one's imagination. During daily, frequent daydreams, the perspective of renouncing something positive which requires a great commitment throws a false light upon our immediate future, so that what in the past would appear as an act of cowardice, now seems to glitter at the horizon of our life, like a dull, flat, somber sky that suddenly lights up, serene, in luminous azure blue. When we listen to such alluring emotions, we pave the way for our doom. A wrong decision may become our crucifixion, our covenant with unhappiness, with a state of inner misery that will last a lifetime.

And lo, some put aside *Kriya Yoga* forever, while others interrupt a course of studies and throw away a profession they had been dreaming for years for which they had fought and suffered. They do the same with a beloved, with friends, with their family itself. Nothing can stop them: the wise words of people near them have no power anymore. An indomitable internal strength wants to produce sheer calamity in their life. Sometimes we have the idea that a person wants only one thing: to affirm with stubbornness his "*right to pain and suffering*" – the last is an expression of *the Mother*; main disciple and companion of *Sri Aurobindo*.

The destructive effects of yielding to this force remind those of an asteroid falling through the atmosphere on its way to fire and destruction. So, there is a reasonable hope that the completion of the Incremental Routines save one from being a victim of this havoc, having built an almost automatic reflex of not being influenced or guided by frantic emotions.

Many *kriyabans* break some important human relationships because they assume that their religious choices are criticized. Sometimes a breakup of a relationship is unavoidable, other times it is a great loss especially if it is the product of the orgasm of pride. Many times people are annoyed by sincere and constructive criticism as if it was a useless display of cruelty.

They believe the other counterpart provokes sadistically enervating discussions with inappropriate topics.

Sometimes kriyabans are too prideful to accept other "uninitiated" people's commonsense. On the contrary, it is necessary to listen to other people's opinion, especially if it comes from our family or from all people who love us. Those who have become prey of destructive cults, have not listened anyone's opinion. The more the criticism has sound basis, the more one feels as if they were swallowing a black, sharp-edged rock.

A kriyaban who believes they are following their heart but who is actually just venting their most violent frustrations, can, on this occasion, reject any discussion and break off a relationship lasting a lifetime with an action of such "radiant" free will as to overwhelm all bystanders. Several days go by and their heart feels heavy; the subtle deception of the mind creates the firm belief that any saint, any true mystic would have acted in the same way. They want to believe that beneath their action there was an almost sacred motive, linked with destiny and karma.

If the risk of retracing one's steps appears, pride will prevail, driving the presently exciting pleasure of freedom to the top. This emotion -- which is perhaps a sadistic satisfaction in disguise -- makes existence to be as beautiful as ever, just like being reborn after a long and painful malady. Wisdom has no chance of prevailing. A strange frenzy fills the mind of our kriyaban, making even the most trivial activity enjoyed with uninterrupted voluptuousness, surrounded by flashes of blue. Yet a pain in their heart remains, despite the rosiest projects. A good crumb of their spiritual aspiration is trapped in a past that can no longer be reached due to their unwillingness to endure the full impact of a truthful and honest reminiscence. Wounded pride is an emotion that suffocates.

Gayatri Kriya

This technique is very ancient and existed before Lahiri Mahasaya begun his mission of spreading *Kriya*. Its structure is well known in India and is considered the subtlest way of using the *Gayatri Mantra*. It contains the same principles of the technique *Japa 432*. Therefore there is no reason to practice both.

The *Gayatri Mantra* is considered to be a supreme vehicle for gaining spiritual enlightenment. The purest form of *Gayatri Mantra* is *Tat Savitur Varenyam Bhargo Devasya Dhimahi Dhiyo Yonaha Prachodayat*. (Oh, great Spiritual Light who has created the Universe, we meditate upon Your

glory. You are the embodiment of Knowledge. You are the remover of all Ignorance. May You enlighten our Intellect and awaken our Intuition.)

This *Mantra* is prefaced with either a short or a long invocation. The short invocation is: *Om Bhur, Om Bhuvah, Om Swaha*. The terms *Bhur, Bhuvah, Swaha* are invocations to honor the three planes of existence (physical, astral, and causal respectively) and to address their presiding deities. The long invocation is: *Om Bhur, Om Bhuvah, Om Swaha, Om Mahah, Om Janah, Om Tapah, Om Satyam*. This invocation is more complete since it recognizes that there are more planes of existence: the seven *Lokas*. *Mahah* is the mental world, the plane of spiritual balance; *Janah* is the world of pure knowledge; *Tapah* is the world of intuition; *Satyam* is the world of Absolute, Ultimate Truth. We can be satisfied with the explanation that these sounds are used to activate the *Chakras* and connect them to the seven spiritual realms of existence. In our procedure, we use only the opening long invocation in its complete form and not all the parts of the *Gayatri Mantra*. The *Kriya* tradition we are following here links *Manipura* with *Om Mahah* and *Anahata* with *Om Swaha*. The reason is that the world of thinking, evoked by *Om Mahah*, is more appropriate to the nature of the third *Chakra*, while the causal world of pure ideas, evoked by *Om Swaha*, is related to *Anahata Chakra*.

Practical instruction

Become aware of the *Muladhara Chakra*. Contract the muscles near its physical location: the contraction can be repeated two-three times. Through a deep inhalation (not necessarily as long as in *Kriya Pranayama*) visualize the *Muladhara Chakra* coming up into the point between the eyebrows, where you perceive it as a full moon. You don't come up "touching" the other *Chakras*. Now they don't exist. Hold the breath and focus on the "inner space" between the eyebrows. This comes out easily with *Kechari Mudra*.⁷ On the screen between the eyebrows, a particular color experience happens – this color is different for each *Chakra*. Mentally chant at least three times the specific *Mantra* for the *Muladhara Chakra*: *Om Bhur*. Then, through a long exhalation, ideally lower this *Chakra* from the point between the eyebrows to its proper location in the spine. Now you know what to do with each other *Chakra*.

⁷ "Ke-chari" is literally translated as "the state of those who fly in the sky, in the ether". A particular "space" is created in the region between the tip of the tongue and the point between the eyebrows and is perceived as a "vacuum", although it is not a physical void. By merging into this empty space, it is easier for a *kriyaban* to perceive the rhythms of each *Chakra* and distinguish them one from another.

The *Mantras* to be utilized are:

Om Bhur for *Muladhara*;
Om Bhuvah for *Swadhisthana*;
Om Mahah for *Manipura*;
Om Swaha for *Anahata*;
Om Janah for *Vishuddha*;
Om Tapah for *Medulla*

Add a particularly intense concentration at the point between the eyebrows. Hold your breath; raise your eyebrows, become aware of the light. Repeat *Om Satyam*.

Now complete the "round" by lifting *Chakras* 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, always using the contraction, the chanting of the *Mantra*, being aware of any particular Light experience in *Kutastha*. If possible repeat the procedure 6 to 12 rounds.

In *Kriya* tradition, the *Chakras* are related to the five *Tattwas*: earth, water, fire, air, and ether. Offering each *Tattwa* individually to the light of the "spiritual eye" gathering and intensifying in the region between the eyebrows is the highest action ever conceived to dispel the last shell of illusion. The experience of the changing colors in the spiritual eye means to perceive the particular vibration and light frequency of each *Chakra*. By familiarizing with these frequencies leads you to the realization that all the universe exists in *Kutastha*.

Advanced practice

In time it will be possible for you to mentally repeat "*Om Bhur*" 36 times holding your breath. This gives you the power to tune with earth-*Tattwa* experiencing the peculiar "vibration" of the *Muladhara Chakra*.

At the same time, by repeating the *Mantra* "*Om Bhuvah*" 36 times it will be possible to tune with water-*Tattwa* having its seat in the second *Chakra*.... then comes the turn of the fire-*Tattwa*...

CHAPTER 10

TRIBHANGAMURARI SCHOOL

In this school the *First level of Kriya* corresponds more or less to what has been described in chapters 6 and 7. The *Second level* corresponds to the three techniques with the *Macro movement Tribhangamurari: Amantrak, Samantrak and Thokar* (this *Thokar* is different from what was described in the preceding chapter 9.) The *Third level* corresponds to the introduction of the *Micro movement Tribhangamurari*. A *Fourth level* is not taken into account.

This is a wonderful way of conceiving the *Second Stage of Kriya Yoga*. It is usually taught in three separate sessions. The *Macro movement Tribhangamurari* is perceived first by simply moving one's breath and awareness along a prescribed path, then this perception happens in the state of tranquil breath and is accompanied by the *Vasudeva Mantra*. At the end this perception is reinforced through the help of the movements of the head. By repeating this procedure, going up from *Muladhara* to the head and coming down following the three-curved path *Tribhangamurari* (*Tri-banga-murari* = form with three curves) each *Chakra* is pierced.

Amantrak

Start a deep, very long inhalation. Your tongue is stable in *Kechari Mudra* or at least in *baby Kechari*. Very slowly raise *Prana* and awareness through the spinal channel, from *Muladhara* to the *Sikha* point (*Bindu*) – half a minute is required. Do not pause in any *Chakra*. Then start a deep exhalation. Let *Prana* and awareness come slowly downwards along the *Tribhangamurari* path and reach *Muladhara*. Another half minute is required.

The *Tribhangamurari* path starts from *Bindu*, goes up to the left of a very short length, then descends toward the right side of the body. Once a particular point in the back (5-6 centimeters above the right nipple) is reached, it curves and moves leftwards to cross the heart knot. After reaching a point in the back that is 5-6 centimeters under the left nipple, it changes its direction again and points toward *Muladhara*.

The 3 procedures *Amantrak, Samantrak* and *Tribhangamurari Thokar* are not intended to be tested simultaneously. You would tend to practice it not

at the full of your capacities. The only effect could be of imprinting indelibly on your mind a wrong way of conceiving the practice.

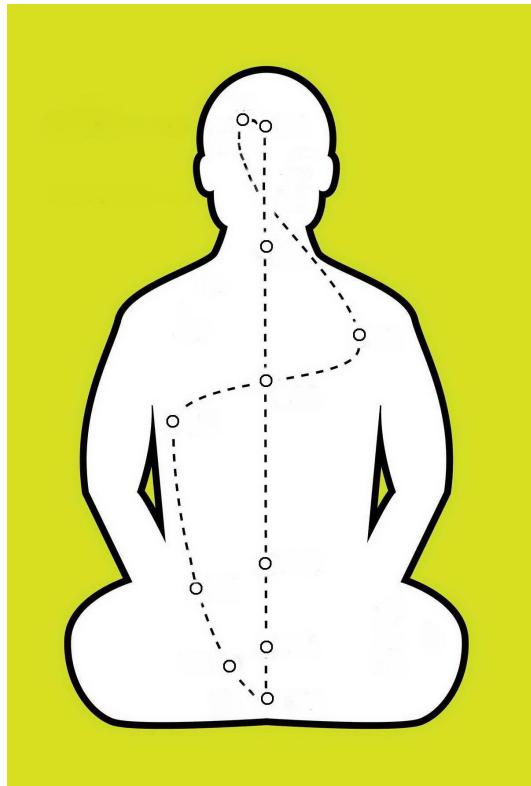


Figure 9. Tribhangamurari path as seen from the back

We call this technique *Amantrak*, which means "without the use of a *Mantra*." The traditional teaching is addressed to expert *kriyabans* who can make their breath subtle and long, very long. It is possible to make a round of *Amantrak* last one minute. If you experience it in a shorter time, let us say 40 seconds, it does not mean that your practice is wrong. However, resolve to do your best to lengthen your breath.

Let us underly the most important aspect of this procedure. Its essence consists in constant intensification of the mental pressure along the whole circuit. Consider the action of squeezing an almost empty tube of toothpaste to get the last bit out. This gives you an idea of the quantity of mental pressure you have to apply during this procedure. If you utilize a great strength of concentration and will, there is no limit to the increase of the internal energetic flow along the *Tribhangamurari* path.

As for the routine, some teachers give this counsel: "For two weeks, repeat this technique 25 times, once a day. Then for another two weeks repeat it 50 times once a day; then for another two weeks 75 times and so on up to 200 times each day for two weeks. Only at this point you are supposed to practice the following *Samantrak* instruction."

Another more quick option is this: "For a couple of months repeat this technique 36 times, once a day, then start to practice the following technique."

Samantrak

Samantrak means: "with the use of a *Mantra*." Now the breath is free. forget it wholly.

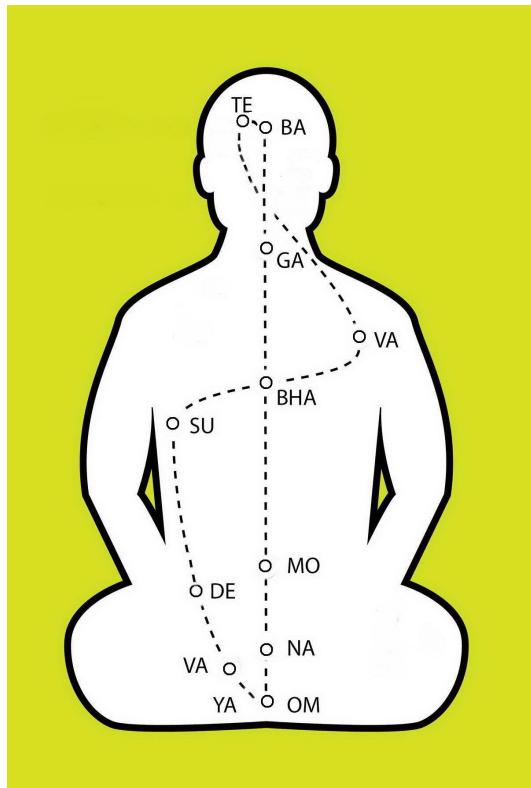


Figure 10. Tribhangamurari path, enriched with the syllables of the Mantra

The syllables *Om*, *Na*, *Mo*, *Bha*, *Ga*, are vibrated into the first five *Chakras*, *Ba* in *Bindu*. *Teee* (with prolonged eee ...) is chanted in the center in left part of the brain. The syllables *Va*, *Su*, *De*, *Va* are put in the four new centers outside the spine; *Ya* is vibrated in *Muladhara*.

These five new centers are five "vortexes" inside the main flow of the current – they are not a new set of *Chakras*. Each syllable when vibrated is like a mental *Thokar* (hit): since the technique is performed slowly, there is plenty of time to make this stimulation very effective.

We have now described one round of *Samantrak*, which lasts one minute. If you realize it is shorter, let us say 45/50 seconds, make a resolution to reach the exact timing.

Remember what we have recommended while introducing *Amantrak*. Now, the essence of this particular procedure consists in utilizing the vibration of the 12 syllables to encourage a more keen intensification of the mental pressure along the whole circuit.

During two weeks repeat this technique 25 times, once a day. Then during another two weeks repeat it 50 times, once a day; then 75 times and so on up to 200 times each day for two weeks. These numbers must be respected. Then you are ready to practice the *Tribhangamurari form of Thokar*.

Don't be in a hurry!

The *Tribhangamurari* techniques have the power to create a permanent transformation in your attitude towards *Kriya* by making you acquainted with a mostly unknown ecstatic state while fully living the experience of life.

The *Mantra*'s syllables, which are put with care like seeds in each center will change your mood. It is like turning on various lights along the three-curved path. Sun and clear skies finally entered your practice.

Some students try to relish right away the power of *Thokar Tribhangamurari* by a desultory, system-less experimentation of *Amantrak* and *Samantrak*, far from abiding by the given rules. What could be the real impact of the *Thokar-Tribhangamurari* technique remains unknown and not even vaguely foreshadowed. First of all you create in your body the perception of a particular internal movement. The *Thokar* along it should be applied only when this energetic flow is well printed in your consciousness.

Thokar Tribhangamurari

Forget the breath or start with a very subtle breath. The hands (with interlocked fingers) are placed on the navel area so as to push the abdominal region upward, thus creating a physical pressure on the first three *Chakras*. Starting with the chin on the chest, move the energy and awareness very slowly along the spinal column from *Muladhara* to *Bindu*. Your chin comes slowly up following the inner movement. "Touch" internally each *Chakra* with the syllables of the *Mantra* (*Om* is placed in the first *Chakra*, *Na* in the second ...). When energy and awareness are at *Bindu*, the chin is parallel to the ground.

Now the descent of the energy begins. The movement of the head follows millimeter by millimeter its downward energetic flow along the

Tribhangamurari path, crossing the heart *Chakra*. All this happens in a fluid way and within 30 seconds or less. The following description of the movements of the head may seem complicated at first but with a minimum of patience, the right movement of the head will be learned: you need only to understand that it is conceived in the most logical and effective way of intensifying a particular snakelike downward flow of the energy. Let us now begin to describe the movements of the head.⁸

Without turning the face, bend your head sideways a couple of centimeters to the left. Return to the middle raising the chin. Remain only an instant in this position, with the chin raised and slowly turn the face to the right and as far as possible. Only the face moves, not the torso. During this SLOW movement the inner flow of energy moves from *Bindu* to the point in the back of the right side of the body. Realize how this simple movement accompanies perfectly the descent of energy.

Here the first of five psycho-physical blows happens: the chin touches the right shoulder for an instant and the syllable *Va* is vibrated in the eighth center. The shoulder also makes a small upward motion to make contact with the chin easier. But be careful: if you feel you're forcing it, STOP! Those who are not able to have this contact with the right shoulder, should content themselves with coming as close to the shoulder as possible and stimulate the eighth center with sheer mental strength.

Then the face turns very slowly to the left, accompanying, millimeter by millimeter, the internal flow of energy from the eighth to the ninth center, and crossing the fourth *Chakra*. If possible, place the chin over the left shoulder. The second blow takes place when the syllable *Su* is vibrated in the ninth center and the chin for an instant touches the left shoulder, which makes a small motion upward to make contact with the chin easier.

Two more blows happen when the syllables *De* and *Va* are put in the tenth and eleventh centers. The procedure is the following: the chin slowly moves toward the middle of the chest while grazing the left collarbone. During this movement, two light blows are given to the left collarbone in intermediate positions. The blows are given of course in the moment in which the syllables of the *Mantra* are vibrated. Finally, a last blow is given on the chest (central position) when the syllable *Ya* is vibrated in *Muladhara*.

⁸ What is essential is: do not be influenced by the dynamics of the technique of classic *Thokar* learned in Chapter 9!

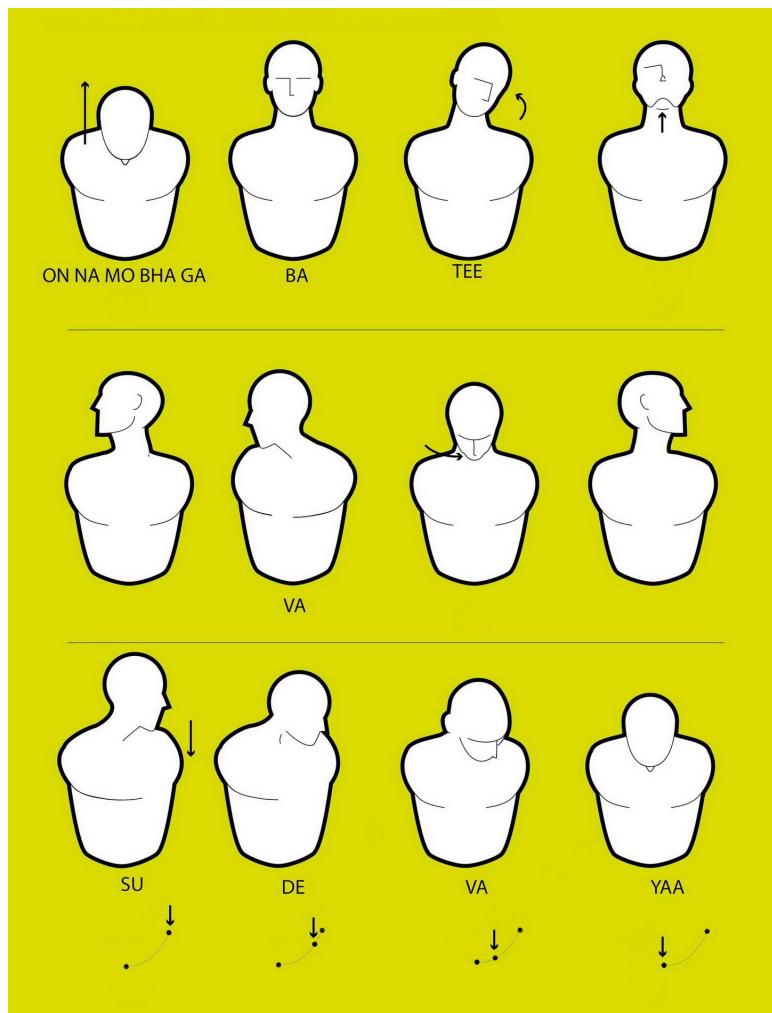


Figure 11. Thokar Tribhangamurari as seen from the front

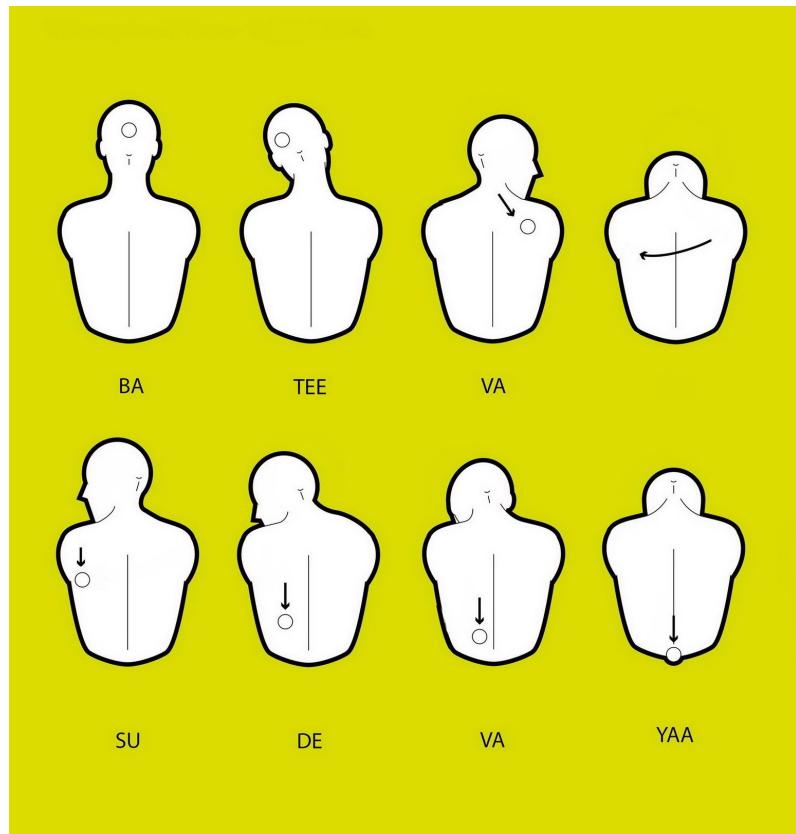


Figure 12. The same movements (only the descent) as seen from the back

I hope it is clear that the essence of this particular procedure consists in utilizing the movements of the head (with the five strokes) to encourage a further intensification of the mental pressure along the whole circuit.

Repeat the procedure 36 times. After completing the programmed number of rounds, calm the system with a minimal practice of *Samantrak*, then relax by practicing a simple *mental Pranayama*.

The supervision of an expert helps to avoid any problems – I am referring to stress and pain in the cervical vertebrae and in the muscles of the neck. Abrupt movements should be avoided; instead use a deep intensity of mental concentration. For the first couple of weeks do not practice every day but every two or three days.

Remark

Through this procedure, the *Tribhangamurari* flow is intensified by specific movements of the head. The problem is that many *kriyabans* focus all the attention on giving the strokes and don't understand the value of creating mental pressure along each millimeter of the path.

We have started with perceiving the movement sensation coming up along the spine and coming down along a three curved path. Then with

Samantrak procedure we have reinforced the perception of the 12 centers. Now it is necessary to feel that the movements of the head accompany perfectly, millimeter after millimeter, the flow of the internal current. Now we can try to intensify the perception of the internal flow by creating a mental pressure along each part of it. We utilize the movements of our head to "touch with pressure" each millimeter of the path, up and down. The chin is to be moved slowly as we are striving to win a strong resistance. We have suggested the idea: "like squeezing with a pencil an almost empty tube of toothpaste to get the last little bit out."

Incremental Routine of the macro movement *Tribhangamurari*

As soon as possible, begin the incremental routine of this procedure by practicing: 36x2, 36x3,..... 36x35, 36x36. Be careful to allow always one week to elapse between one stage and the next. I recommend this routine as a very important feat. A minimum of 8-10 months is required to complete it.

While *Amantrak* and *Samantrak* are practiced every day, the *Incremental* sessions of *Thokar-Tribhangamurari* are practiced once a week (the other days one can, however, practice up to 36 repetitions.) A *kriyaban* must have had all the time necessary to metabolize the subconscious material that the strong action exerted upon *Muladhara* brings to the surface.

One begins with 36 rounds; a week later one practices 36x2, then 36x3 ... and finally 36x36 repetitions. This means 1296 rounds! Can you imagine the powerful effects of this action? 1296 means that you begin in the morning and end in the night, doing again and again the same action. There is no doubt that you'll succeed in opening the door of *Sushumna*! Of course you have prepared this experience by practicing 36x35, and before that 36x34.... And don't forget that you have practiced *Amantrak* and *Samantrak* for months!

MICRO MOVEMENT TRIBHANGAMURARI

We shall discuss here the way of conceiving the *Third Stage of Kriya Yoga* as it is taught by the "*Tribhangamurari*" schools. You have to focus on *Kutastha* while, at the same time, perceiving a micro-movement *Tribhangamurari* in the seat of each *Chakra*.

This procedure reminds the teaching of Swami Hariharananda. He taught us to contact the *Omkar* reality in its manifestations of sound, light and movement or swinging sensation. The swinging sensation of the *Omkar* reality had a central place in his teaching.⁹ The books of *Yoga* explain the importance of feeling the energy moving throughout the body, for example rising from the *Muladhara* along the spine or, as Sri Aurobindo explained, coming down from the high and infused in the body. Swami Hariharananda on the contrary hinted at a feeling of movement or better of oscillation within each *Chakra*.

Perceiving an oscillation inside each *Chakra* is not exactly like perceiving the *Tribhangamurari* form in small dimensions, however the effects are, more or less, the same. The state of "absorption" created by having this particular perception in each *Chakra* has no comparison. Only few *Kriya* schools have disclosed the nature of this micro-movement and revealed its importance. Unfortunately, many people seek frantically impossible surrogates for it!

Practical instruction

After a minimum of 12 rounds of *Thokar Tribhangamurari*, you learn now to experience the movement *Tribhangamurari* in smaller dimensions inside the 12 centers of the *Macro Tribhangamurari* path.

Through a short inhalation, raise the *Prana* from the *Muladhara Chakra* into the spiritual eye between your eyebrows. Gently lower your chin, hold your breath and look "down" at the *Muladhara Chakra*. Visualize it as a horizontal disk, having a diameter of approximately one inch. On that disk perceive the *Tribhangamurari* movement in reduced dimensions.

Don't worry about the required time: it may be short, it may be long it doesn't matter. Exert a moderate but continuous pressure on the disk as if you had a pen and were drawing a clear continuous mark. Repeat two more

⁹ I remember that during his meeting with devotees he touched the head and the chest of some of them, vibrating his hand, trying to transmit a feeling as of a "oscillation."

times. Your breath is held effortlessly; the *Prana* remains totally in *Ajna Chakra*. After three perceptions of the Micro movement, you can relax and let *Prana* come down. A subtle exhalation happens but you may not be aware of it.

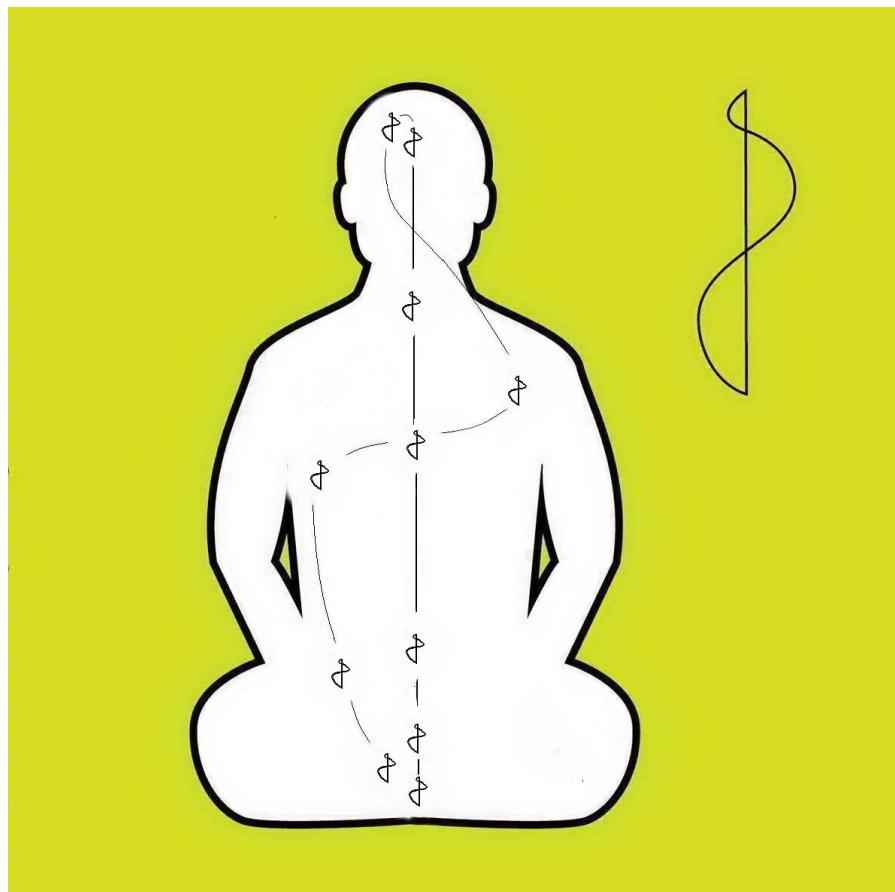


Figure 13. Tribhangamurari micro movement in each of the 12 centers

Move to the second *Chakra* and repeat the same procedure. Repeat it for *Chakras 3, 4, 5*, then for *Bindu*, then for the five new centers and finally for *Muladhara*.

This is round 1: practice two more rounds. Be faithful to this practice for at least three months before starting to increase the mental pressure upon each center employing the syllables of the *Vasudeva Mantra*.

Micro movement Tribhangamurari utilizing the Mantra

In my opinion, this technique is the highest procedure contained in this second part of the book. It contains a mystery of Unworldly Beauty. Among the debris of past illusions, such experience open the doors of the spiritual realization. This internal movement embodies the deeper aspect of the Omkar reality. Perceiving it means to annihilate any form of duality present in the Chakras and therefore, in your awareness. It is as if the

center between the eyebrows become one with each lower Chakra, fusing them in a unique reality. This will lead you out of time and space. A burning aspiration towards the Divine is born from this.

Practice *Kechari Mudra*. Through a short inhalation, raise the *Prana* from the *Muladhara Chakra* into the spiritual eye between your eyebrows. Forget the breath and look "down" at the *Muladhara Chakra*. Mentally utter the syllables "*Om-Na-Mo-Bha-Ga-Ba-Te-Va-Su-De-Va-Ya*". Do this *Japa* without hurry. Perceive the micro-movement *Tribhangamurari* and realize how the mental chant of the 12 syllables add a greater "pressure" to it.

Remain immobile with no movement at all of the spinal column or of the head. Here all the power of pressure has to be obtained with the sheer repetition of the syllables of the *Mantra*. These syllables are like mini "thrusts" or "pulsations".

The duration of one round is determined by the speed of the chanting of the *Mantra*. For many people, the chanting of the *Mantra* and consequently, the micro-movement lasts about 10-12 seconds. Remember that Lahiri Mahasaya's recommendation was "Don't be in a hurry!" Observe the difference between going slowly and with speed. If you go slowly, you will perceive a tremendous power.

Repeat the *Vasudeva Mantra* three times. *Prana* remains totally in the head. After three perceptions of the micro-movement, repeat the same procedure in *Chakras* 2, 3, 4, 5, then in *Bindu*, then in the five centers outside the spine, and finally in *Muladhara*. This is one round: practice 3-12 rounds. At the end of this practice, remain with the awareness centered in the light that you will perceive in the upper part of your head. If you have proceeded without hurry you will get a state that can be defined "beyond time."

If, after the completion of the practice, you find the time to lie down supine (*Savasana*) you will get a particular state of physical and mental immobility where the *Kundalini* energy can climb up to the *Chakra* of the heart while the *Kutastha* will reveal itself.

Incremental Routine of the micro movement *Tribhangamurari*, to be completed in the last part of life

When I received this instruction I was told that, analogously to the *Yoni Mudra* which is practiced every night at the moment a *kriyaban* prepares to

withdraw his awareness from the body and from the physical world and gets ready for sleep – which is a "small death" – the *Micro movement Tribhangamurari Incremental Routine* is like a peaceful return to the origin – a preparation to "die forever" – meaning to become forever free in Spirit. It was explained to me that this last *Incremental Routine*, besides being the best preparation for the conscious exit out of the body at death (*Mahasamadhi*), burned forever the necessity of reincarnating.¹⁰

In *Micro-movement Incremental Routine* we have 36 sessions of practice. What's new is that the major part of this session requires more than one day.

On the first day you perceive 36 Micro-movements in each of the 12 centers. The second session requires that you perceive 36x2 Micro movements in each center. [You experience one single long round: 72 Micro movements in the first *Chakra* without interruption, then 72 in the second *Chakra*, and so on....] After some days, you face the third session with 36x3 Micro movements in each center. Then other days pass by. Then you have your 36x4 session which will fill up your whole day.

The next steps: 36x5, 36x6, 36x7, 36x8, will not only fill up a whole day but also part of the next day. Therefore you must divide your effort into two parts. What was heretofore never allowed now happens: you can sleep a whole night between the two parts which are considered one session. What is important is that you start more or less immediately on the morning of the next day. Therefore, you are not allowed to go to work and it is also recommended that you keep silent, avoiding any opportunity for conversation. (However, the use of common sense should always prevail; if addressed, a polite reply is always imperative.)

You can now understand that the following sessions require more days; the last session requires about 12 days! Let me describe what happens during the last session: you perceive 36x36 micro movements in each center! This means: 1296 micro movements in *Muladhara*, 1296 in *Swadhistan*.... and so on, ending after some days in *Muladhara* with 1296

¹⁰ As for what happens during the process of *Mahasamadhi*, we have heard many stories about possible "Kriya ways" of leaving the physical shell; obviously we cannot vouch for their authenticity. Some assert that the typical practice is *Thokar*, others hint at procedures happening entirely in *Kutastha*. We can reasonably assume that it is not always possible to perform the physical movement of *Thokar*. To focus one's awareness in the spine or at the point between the eyebrows may be the only thing possible. The most interesting thing I've heard is that some *kriyabans*, during the last weeks or months before leaving the body, practice only one technique: perceiving the *Micro-movement Tribhangamurari* nel *Kutastha*. At the moment of death, they merge with the Infinite through the same procedure.

movements.

Let me emphasize that one should never skip over a stage. Don't think, "On my next Summer holidays I'm going to find a dozen days to practice 36x36." No! It does not work in this way. Before perceiving the Micro movement 36x36 times in each center you must have perceived it 36x35 times. And before this, you should have perceived it 36x34 times, and so on....

Completing this *Incremental Routine* is really a giant achievement. Many splendid experiences will happen and the last internal obstacles will be cleared one after another. When you have completed your practice, you discover that you cannot describe it because the bliss experienced has totally effaced from your memory the modalities of your experience.

A *kriyaban* should make every effort to create the opportunity to grant himself the joy and the privilege of completing the recommended number of repetitions without every yielding to the temptation of hurried practices.

CHAPTER 11

OMKAR SCHOOL

The *Omkar* school (I am referring to the *Kriya* school originating from *Swami Hariharananda*) is a fantastic way to deepen the practice of *Kriya*. *Swami Hariharananda* explained us that the *Omkar* reality reveals as Sound, Light and Movement sensation. This was indeed a great revelation. I am thankful for what I have learned at the feet of this Teacher. I am also thankful to a pair of his disciples as well – they have helped me to reason.

In the following techniques the tongue is in the position that I usually call "baby *Kechari Mudra*."

[I] FIRST LEVEL OF KRIYA

In this school the *First level of Kriya* is different from the one adopted by the schools we have described up to now.

First Kriya routine

- [1.1] Maha Mudra in two parts (Forward bendings and Maha Mudra proper)
- [1.2] Kriya Pranayama
- [1.3] Jyoti Mudra
- [1.4] Paravastha

[I.1] Maha Mudra in two parts (Forward bendings and Maha Mudra proper)

In this school *Maha Mudra* is given with unsurpassed care, making *Omkar* realization almost tangible even to a beginner. This *Maha Mudra* is divided into two parts: the *Forward Bendings* and *Maha Mudra proper*.

Forward bendings

Sit on the pavement in the half-lotus position or on the heels. Exhale. Concentrate on *Ajna* in the center of your head. Through a deep inhalation (not too long) visualize the breath coming from the physical location of *Muladhara* up the spine until you complete the breath at *Ajna*. Hold your breath. Bend at the waist and preferably touch the floor with your head. (The head is placed in the region between the knees. Use your hands freely in order to achieve this position comfortably.)

Gently breathe out and let the breath free. After touching the forehead to the floor, twist first to the right, nearing the right earlobe to the right knee. The head comes near the right knee, the face is turned toward the left knee so that it is possible to perceive a pressure on the right side of the head; a sensation of space is perceived inside the left side of the brain. Remain in this position for 3 to 30 seconds. Move head back to center until forehead touches ground. Then repeat the same exercise with the other side of your body, reversing the perceptions. Move your head until your left ear is directly over the left knee. Try to experience internal pressure in the left-side of your head; a sensation of space is perceived inside the right side of the brain. Remain in this position for 3 to 30 seconds. Then the head is placed in the region between the knees again, the face turned downward. A pressure is felt on the forehead. A sensation of space is perceived inside the occipital region.

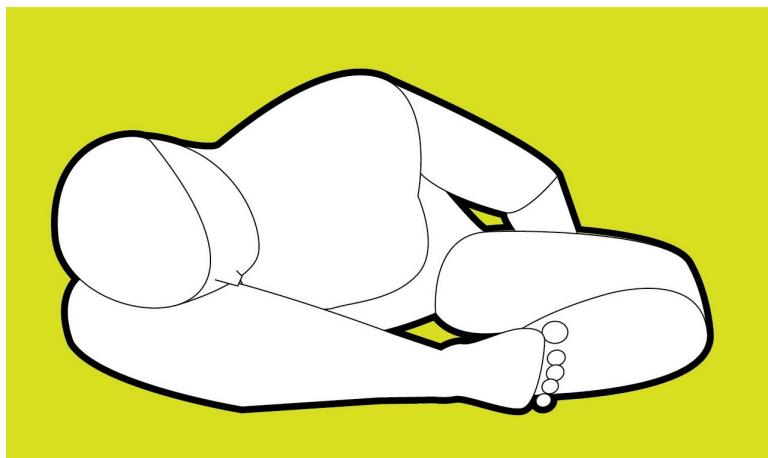


Figure 14. Forward bent. First position

During this delicate process you are breathing normally and your awareness is mainly at *Ajna* while your eyes are focused on *Kutashta*. Then sit up straight, inhaling deeply. Through a long exhalation let the energy go down from *Ajna* to *Muladhara*. Through a deep inhalation visualize the breath coming from the physical location of *Swadhisthana* up the spine until you complete the breath at *Ajna*. Repeat all the previous process just as we have done for *Muladhara*. At the end through a long exhalation you guide the energy from *Ajna* to *Swadhisthana*. Then repeat the same process for *Manipura*, *Anahata*, *Vishuddha* and *Medulla*. In this way you will enjoy six bows.

Note

To increase the power of this procedure, you can hold your breath when you are down. You will get a very strong sensation of energy rising up and intensifying in the point between your eyebrows. Breath retention is a powerful *Kundalini*

stimulator. If you are not ready for the power generated by this procedure, if you feel like "spaced out" after your meditation or if you feel too much irritable, don't hold your breath.

When you bend your body left, your right nostril will open. When you bend your body right, your left nostril will open. When you bend your body in the front, you get equal pressure of flow of breath inside your nostrils. You get balance of the mind and calmness in your body. Your spinal chord passage will open.

The lunar channel of *Ida* is situated at the left side of the spine; the solar channel of *Pingala* is situated at the right side of the spine. Both chords cling to each other. By repeating the previous procedure, they are separated and, as a consequence, an hollow passage is opened between the two. The opening of the spiritual passage within the spine (*Sushumna*) is the starting point of the practice of meditation.

Maha Mudra

Bend the left leg under the body so the left heel is near to the perineum. Draw the right knee against the body so the thigh is as close to the chest as possible. The interlocked fingers are placed just below knee applying pressure to your internal organs. Take 5 to 6 very deep breaths with moderate pressure applied to knee. Then inhale deep and hold, extend the right leg, bow down, breath normally and massage the right leg from the foot to the thigh and hip.

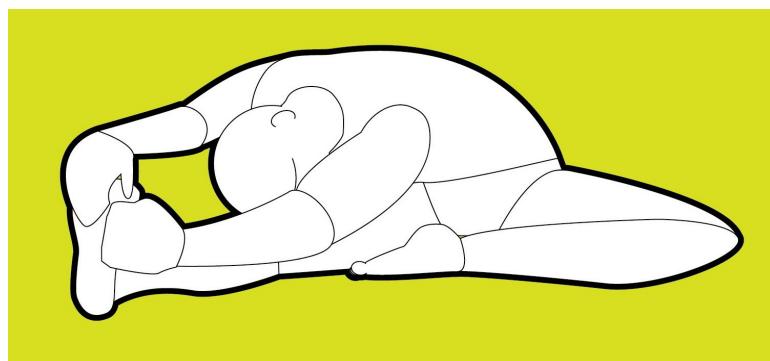


Figure 15. Here the face is turned to the left

Then grasp the right foot in this way: the right hand grabs the right toes while the left hand grabs the inner side of the middle part of the right foot (the arch of the foot). The face is turned to the left. You perceive a sensation like an inner pressure on the right side of the head. It contrasts with the free space sensation in the left side of the brain. Chant *Om* six times in the point between your eyebrows. Then inhale and hold, sit back

up onto your left foot with right knee folded into your chest, then exhale into normal conscious breathing.

Practice the whole procedure by reversing the perceptions and the position of the legs. I won't repeat everything – don't forget the chant of *Om* six times in the point between your eyebrows.

Now, draw both knees against your body. Extend both legs, bow down, breath normally and massage both legs from feet to thighs and hips. Then grasp both feet: right hand to right toes, left hand to left toes. Breathe normally, flex feet 4 or 5 times then relax with the head down as near to knees as possible. Experience internal pressure on the front part of the head. A sensation of space is perceived inside the occipital region. Chant *Om* six times in the point between your eyebrows. Then inhale, sit up and hold. Massage briefly toes, fold legs back to chest and exhale. As usual, this exercise is repeated three times.

Kriya Pranayama

With eyes closed, deeply inhale into *Fontanelle*. Then exhale into *Ajna*. Hold breath for few seconds (3-4) then inhale up to *Fontanelle*. Hold your breath for few seconds. Then exhale to *Vishuddha*, hold for a few seconds then inhale to *Fontanelle*. Hold your breath for few seconds. Then exhale to *Anahata* ... and so on. At a certain point you have reached the *Muladhara*. Hold your breath for few seconds. Then inhale to *Fontanelle*.

Now repeat in reverse order. Exhale down from *Fontanelle* to *Muladhara*. Hold your breath for few seconds. Then inhale to *Fontanelle*, hold your breath. Then exhale down to *Swadhisthana Chakra* ... pause... inhale... and so on until you exhale down from *Fontanelle* to *Ajna*. This is one cycle (12 breaths). You can repeat the whole cycle for a couple of times.

During the pause between inhalation and exhalation (the awareness is in *Fontanelle*) the breath should be held 2 to 3 seconds, but after several weeks of *Pranayama*, the time of each pause can be gradually increased up to 30 seconds. This detail is very important to create a deeper calmness.

Jyoti Mudra

Close your ears with your thumbs while with the index fingers press lightly at the corners of the eyes or covering your eyes with a small pressure. Focus on *Kutastha*. Allow that part of your attention goes down in the *Muladhara*. Then ideally lift this *Chakra* through an inhalation to the point between the eyebrows. Hold the breath for as long as you feel comfortable (about 10 -15 sec) while trying to perceive the particular light of *Muladhara* in *Kutastha*. Exhale and ideally place *Muladhara Chakra* back

down to its original position. Part of the attention moves now on the second Chakra. Then do exactly what you have done with the *Muladhara Chakra*. Then thanks to a short exhalation, this Chakra is ideally brought back into its seat...

The same happens to the *Chakras 3, 4, 5* and *Medulla*. Always try to see the light at the point between the eyebrows. Feel that you are offering each center to the light of the spiritual eye. To end the procedure, put the palms of your hands over the eyelids and remain there seeing a white Light for 2-3 min. When the Light disappears, lower your hands.

Paravastha

Paravastha is the state ensuing a good practice of *Kriya*. Remain longer in meditation listening to divine Sound, feeling the vibration and enjoying the divine Light. Perceive the focus of your concentration slowly rising from *Kutastha* to *Fontanelle* and above *Fontanelle* outside of the body. Remain without thoughts perceiving this inner sky which starts from the upper part of your head. When you come to the end of your meditation routine, open your eyes. Stare at what is before you but do not observe anything in particular. Watch without watching. Keep 99% of your attention to *Fontanelle*. After a while you will become aware of a subtle line of white Light, softened, as a fog, around all objects. The Light will become progressively white and greater. Avoid thinking. Keep the gaze fix. After 5 minutes close your eyes and rest for awhile before standing.

[II] SECOND LEVEL OF KRIYA

[II.1] Second Kriya formal part

The hands, with fingers intertwined, rest on the abdomen. Inhalation and exhalation are fragmented into 6 + 6 parts. Starting with your chin on the chest, inhale, moving your awareness upwards along the spinal column. Simultaneously, slowly raise the chin as if to accompany the energy and push the energy up. The syllables of the *Vasudeva Mantra* (*Om Namo Bhagavate Vasudevaya*) are mentally placed in each *Chakra* location, while making a short pause in each. During the first "sip" of inhalation, the concentration is on the *Muladhara*, where the syllable *Om* is ideally "put"; during the second "sip", the concentration is on the second *Chakra*, where the syllable *Na* is ideally put ... *Mo* in the third, *Bha* in the fourth, *Ga* in the fifth and *Ba* in *Bindu* (*medulla* is not ideally hit.) Now the inhalation is completed and the chin is horizontal.

Hold the breath and practice *Kechari Mudra* as best as you can. The head bends forward towards the throat cavity: the divine Light flows down from

above into the occipital region of the brain (therefore in the part of your head that is turned towards the ceiling.) After feeling this for a second or more, resume the normal position and immediately bend the head slightly toward the left shoulder, without turning the face. The previous experience of the divine Light infusion happens again in the right part of the head.

Resume the normal position and bend the head slightly backwards: the experience of divine Light happens in the frontal part of the head. Then bend your head toward the right shoulder... the experience of divine Light happens in the left part of the head. Close the round by repeating the first movement.

After concluding one rotation of the head, exhalation starts. The exhaling breath is divided into six punctuated parts or pulses. While lowering the chin at a slow pace, the awareness comes down along the spinal column. The syllable *Te* (usually is the final "e" is lengthened: *Teeee*) is placed in *Medulla*, *Va* in the fifth *Chakra*... and so on ... *Su*... *De*... *Va*, until *Ya* (lengthened: *Yaaaa*) is mentally chanted in the *Muladhara*. If this is comfortable make a short pause after exhalation. During it, the awareness makes a complete, counter-clockwise turn around the *Muladhara Chakra*.

What I have described is called by me *Omkar Pranayama* – in order to avoid saying: "*Second Kriya formal part.*"

The timing of one *Omkar Pranayama* depends on the individual: usually it is approximately 45-50 seconds but from a certain point onwards, the speed of each repetition of *Omkar Pranayama* slows down. The breath is "sucked in" and seems to be dissolved. From that moment onwards, all the physical details are only hinted.

You have probably read that in a deep *Pranayama*, the energy crosses the *Chakras* just like the thread of a necklace passes through the pearls. It may also happen that the "thread" of energy envelops each "pearl". The counter clockwise rotation of awareness around the crown (induced by the experience of Light coming down from above) can be also perceived in small dimensions winding around the *Medulla*.

When exhalation begins and you mentally chant *Teeee*, you can use the starting instants of exhalation to intensify the psychic pressure around the *Medulla*. This internal action is extended in a natural way to the other *Chakras*. The path of descent becomes a "helix" that surrounds and creates pressure around each *Chakra*. Go slowly and do not be in a hurry and let the process proceed at its own pace.

[II.2] Second Kriya informal part

The breath is natural (as in *mental Pranayama*.) In each *Chakra* we shall mentally repeat its associated syllable many, many times. In *Muladhara* repeat *Om, Om, Om, Om, Om...* about 36 times. (Do not use *Mala* to count – remain immobile.) The speed at which you chant the syllables is about two per second. Visualize that *Chakra* as a horizontal disk, having a diameter of approximately one inch. Visualize these syllables moving on the surface of the disk in counterclockwise direction, near the circumference.

Then focus on the second *Chakra* where you will do exactly the same action, utilizing the second syllable of the *Mantra*, namely: *Na, Na, Na, Na, Na...* about 36 times. Then focus on the third, repeating *Mo, Mo, Mo, Mo, Mo....* about 36 times. Then focus on the fourth, repeating *Bha, Bha, Bha, Bha ...* then on the fifth (*Ga, Ga, Ga, Ga, Ga*), then on *Bindu* (*Ba, Ba, Ba, Ba, Ba*).

Now practice the five bents of the head but in a slower way.

The chin bends forward, towards the throat cavity: the divine Light flows down from above the head (seat of the Eternal Tranquility) into the occipital region of the brain. After feeling this for about 10-20 seconds, resume the normal position and bend the head slightly toward the left shoulder, without turning the face. The previous experience of the divine Light infusion happens. Divine Light flows down from above the head into the right part of the brain. Remain in this position for about 10-20 seconds, then resume the normal position. Now the head bends backwards: the same experience happens and divine Light flows down into the frontal part of the brain. Remain in this position for about 10-20 seconds, then resume the normal position.

Now the head bends slightly toward the right shoulder, without turning the face. The same experience happens and divine Light flows down into the left part of the brain, then the spine and the body....

To close the round, the chin bends forward, towards the throat cavity: the same experience happens The head then resumes its normal position.

You have perceived Light and divine blessings in each of the four parts of your brain. In this way, the spiritual Light will gradually pervade each atom of the upper part of your head.

Then focus on *Medulla* repeating many times *Te, Te, Te, Te, Te ...* The absorption state is really strong. Then you will focus on the fifth Chakra utilizing *Va, Va, Va*

...then fourth.... third second *Muladhara*.

Going up this way from *Muladhara* to *Bindu* and coming down repeating the same procedure is one round: the time required is approximately 4-6 minutes. Repeat 3-4 times and then be lost in the meditative state.

Key points

[1] Moving from one *Chakra* to the next, a *kriyaban* begins to notice the change of the light vibration in the region between the eyebrows. Later, you will have the experience that a specific sound comes from each center. Being absorbed in listening to astral sound creates inner bliss, putting aside – at least momentarily – our Ego consciousness. This is the moment when the *Omkar* reality is revealed.

[2] After completing this procedure, the upper part of the brain will remain ideally in the space, separated from the physical body. Swami Hariharananda said that this procedure ends in "cracking the coconut." The coconut is the head, whose upper part will be detached from the lower part. You must actively cooperate to reach this result. You must "invite" the divine energy to pervade the frontal, lateral and back part of your head.

During the day remain in this state as much as you can. Whenever you can withdraw for a short meditation, tune yourself with the Sound, Light, formless power of the Divine rotating inside the cranium.

[II.3] Employment of the 50 letter-sounds of the Sanskrit alphabet

Swami Hariharananda took the decision of teaching a practice typical of the *Tantric Hatha Yoga*. It was taught for a certain number of years, later he put it aside. In my opinion it is interesting to give just a hint to it. This procedure is meant to help the seeker to perceive the Divine Energy in the *Chakras* and in the different parts of the body

In each Chakra

The 50 letter-sounds of the Sanskrit alphabet will be chanted visualizing the petals of each *Chakra*. There is no breath control.

Start with Hang Kshang in *Ajna Chakra*: Hang in the left hemisphere of the brain and Kshang in the right. Then place the 16 vowels in the *cervical Chakra* (Ang Aang Ing Iing Ung Uung Ring Rring Lring Llring Eng Aing Ong Oung Aung Ah) – you chant each letter only once, the same for all the following Chakras. In this practice you visualize each *Chakra* as a vertical disk radiating Divine Light through its petals. Visualize the number of petals assigned by *yogic* tradition in clockwise direction. Then place the first 12 consonants in *heart Chakra* (Kong Khong Gong Ghong Wong

Chong Chhong Jong Jhong Neong Tong Thong), chant the following 10 in *Manipura* (Dong Dhong Nong Tong Thong Dong Dhong Noing Pong Phong), then the following 6 in *Swadhistan* (Bong Bhong Mong Jong Rong Long) and finally the last 4 in *Muladhara* (Vong Shhong Shong Song). In each *Chakra*, you start from upper left go down left and come up from the right part. Three cycles are recommended. Close repeating the two letters Hang Kshang in *Ajna*.

In the crown of the head

The 50 letter-sounds of the Sanskrit alphabet are spiraled around the cranium, activating the *Omkar* sound which is perceived in the center of the brain – in the so called "Cave of *Brahma*", the seat of the pituitary and of the pineal gland. You start from the back of the crown, begin with the vowels, then the consonants. Make all the tour counterclockwise, then repeat clockwise. Twelve couple of rotations (6+6) are recommended

The good effects of this procedure are easily to be perceived and therefore this procedure is perceived as "heaven sent."

In different parts of the body

The 50 letter-sounds of the Sanskrit alphabet are placed in the 50 parts in which the human body [according to the tantric tradition] can be divided.

No breath control. Put your hand on the different parts of your body that we shall describe, uttering distinctly at the same time the appropriate letter for that part.

1 ANG Forehead	2 AANG Mouth	3 ING Left eye	4 IING Right eye
5 UNG Left ear	6 UUNG Right ear	7 RING Left nostril	8 RRING Right nostril
Right nostril	9 LRING Left cheek	10 LLRING Right cheek	11
ENG Inner mouth (without touching)	12 AING Chin	13 ONG Upper lip and set of teeth	
14 OUNG Lower lip and set of teeth	15 AUNG Forehead & top of head		
16 AH Whole face (touching with both hands)		17 KONG Left shoulder	
18 KHONG Left elbow	19 GONG Left wrist	20 GHONG Left knuckle	
21 WONG Left finger joints	22 CHONG Right shoulder	23 CHHONG Right elbow	
24 JONG Right wrist	25 JHONG Right knuckle	26 NEONG Right finger joints	
27 TONG Left thigh joint	28 THONG Left knee	29 DONG Left ankle	30 DHONG Ball of the left foot
31 NONG Left toes	32 TONG Right thigh joint	33 THONG Right knee	34 DONG Right ankle
35 DHONG Ball of the right foot	36 NOING Right toes	37 PONG Left ribs	38 PHONG Right ribs
39 BONG Whole back (touch up and down)		40 BHONG	

Lower abdomen 41 MONG Upper abdomen 42 JONG Heart center
43 RONG Left shoulder 44 LONG Back of neck 45 VONG Right shoulder
46 SHHONG From left shoulder to right hand 47 SHONG
From right shoulder to left hand 48 SONG From left shoulder to right foot
49 HAM From right shoulder to left foot 50 AKSHAM Moving down the front of the body

[III] THIRD LEVEL OF KRIYA (advanced form of Jyoti Mudra)

According to my understanding of Kriya this technique is the *Third level* of the *Omkar School*. However in the tradition it is called "*Jyoti Mudra Second Kriya*."

During this practice you contract (and then relax) the muscles near the physical location of each *Chakra*. The position of the hands and fingers for this Jyoti Mudra is the same as in First Kriya: you stick your thumbs in your ears with the index fingers covering your eyes.

Become aware of the *Muladhara Chakra*. Contract the muscles near *Muladhara*: the back part of the perineum. Then lift this *Chakra* through an inhalation to *Kutastha*. Hold the breath for as long as you feel comfortable (about 10 -15 sec) while trying to perceive the particular Light of *Muladhara* in *Kutastha*. Relax the tension and exhale .

Then make a "leap of awareness" to the second *Chakra Swadhisthana* and contract the muscles of the sex organ and the sacrum. You can practice *Vairoli Mudra* (contract and relax both the urethral sphincter and the muscles of the back near the sacral center.) Then do exactly what you have done with the *Muladhara Chakra*...

When *Swadhisthana* is again in its initial position, place the focus of your awareness on the third *Chakra Manipura*. Tighten the muscles of the abdomen at the level of the navel: quickly contract and relax the navel, the abdominal muscles and the lumbar are of the spine. Then do exactly what you have done with the previous two *Chakras*...

Repeat the same scheme for *Anahata Chakra*. Expand the chest. Bring the shoulder blades together and concentrate on the spine near the heart. Feel the contraction of the muscles near the dorsal center. Then lift this *Chakra* through an inhalation to the point between the eyebrows. Hold etc.

Focus on the fifth *Chakra Vishuddha*. Move your head quickly from side to side (without turning your face) a couple of times, perceiving a grinding sound in the cervical vertebrae. This is only to localize the cervical center.

Now contract the muscles of the back of the neck near the cervical vertebrae. To astrally locate Vishuddha Chakra we need a different procedure. Inhale from the cervical center without particular muscle concentration to Kutastha. Now, holding your breath, practice the five inclinations of the head:

- a) turn the head to the left (the hands follow; the slight pressure upon ears and eyes does not change) the right elbow comes near the right breast,
- b) turn the head to the right, the left elbow comes near the left breast,
- c) return to the central position and bow the head forward;
- d) bow the head back
- e) then again in the front. Return to the normal position

Exhale from *Kutastha* to the *Vishuddha Chakra*.

For *Medulla* we have the following procedure. Inhale very slowly from the base of the spine. During this inhalation, contract the muscles at the base of the spine, then the muscles near the sex organ, then the muscles near the navel and near the *Manipura Chakra*, then contract the muscles near the dorsal center, near the region of the throat and, finally, clench your teeth and put wrinkles in the forehead. see the light at the point between the eyebrows. Feel that you are offering your sixth center to God. Exhale and release the contraction.

For *Sahasrara Chakra* we have the following procedure. Inhale, contract all centers like we have done for *Ajna Chakra* then with teeth clenched, push the portion of your head which is above the eyebrows (cranium) up into the high heavens, offer it to God. Exhale, and release the contraction.

To end the procedure, put the palms of your hands over the eyelids and remain there seeing a milky white Light for 2-3 min. When the Light disappears, lower your hands and bow in the front and pray to the form of God you prefer. Open your eyes but remain concentrated inside, in the pituitary gland and see the divine Light in all things. Then enjoy *Paravastha* as in the *First Kriya*.

[IV] FOURTH LEVEL OF KRIYA

We have defined *Fourth Kriya* (See chapter 8) the meditation without action that happens in the upper part of the brain where the dimension of *static Prana* reigns. This Fourth level is here divided into six phases. There is always a minimum of action: only in the final state of *Samadhi* (the last of these six phases) there is properly no action.

[IV.1] Brain orbit – with physical movement

The breath is natural, not controlled. Practice *Kechari Mudra* to the best of your ability. Bend your head forward. Feel the energy present in the frontal region of your head and mentally vibrate *Bha* there. Without raising your chin to normal position, guide slowly your head in the position in which the head is bent toward the left shoulder – as if you try touching the left shoulder with your left ear. Feel the energy present in the left side of the brain (over your left ear) and mentally vibrate *Ga* there. From this position, guide slowly both your head and the flow of energy backwards in the occipital region of the brain. Mentally vibrate *Ba* there. Slowly guide your head in the position in which the head is bent toward the right shoulder – as if you try touching the right shoulder with the right ear. Mentally chant *Teee* on the right side of the brain (over your right ear.) Always feel the flow of energy moving to each position. Slowly return to initial position with the head bent forward. Mentally vibrate *Ba* there.

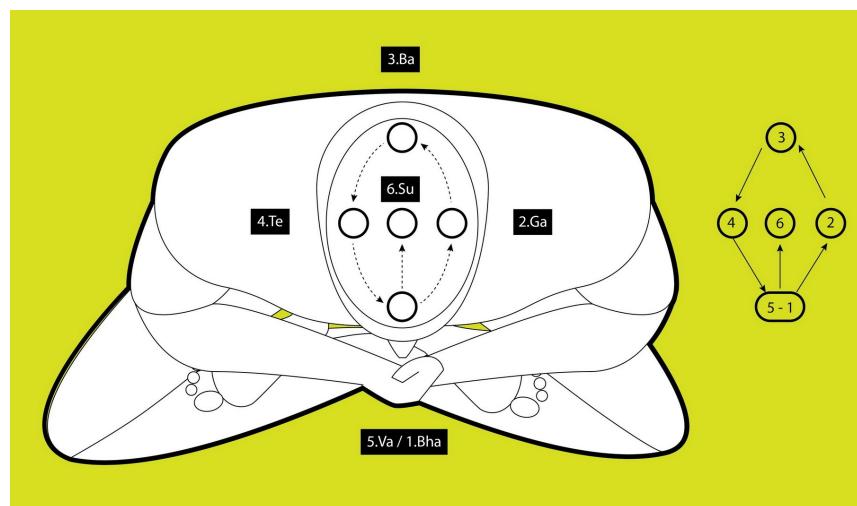


Figure 16. Circulation of calm Prana in the upper part of the brain

Now, slowly straighten your head and return with chin parallel to the ground while your attention moves toward the central part of your brain

under *Fontanelle*. Mentally vibrate *Su* there. This completes the first round. Repeat this practice 12 times.

This rotation of energy is, by some teachers, called *Thokar Kriya*. The reason is that during this practice the energy moves *with pressure* through the brain substance. Reflect: *Thokar* has not the unique meaning of "blow" but also that of "*touching with pressure*." This internal pressure, this friction, creates the Divine Light manifestation.

[IV.2] Brain orbit – immobility

After having completed the required number of rotations, it is not difficult to move to this last part in which the energetic movement happens in immobility.

Breath naturally. Repeat mentally, without hurry and without moving your head, the syllables *Bha, Ga, Ba, Te, Ba, Su* trying to perceive the same energetic movement you have previously induced. A ball of Light is turning inside your brain. After each round, this Light comes internally under *Fontanelle*. Practice about 36 rounds during each *Kriya* routine.

Note

These two last practices create a very strong effect. In a merciless way you become aware of the ego's subtle tricks that drive human actions. The reason for many wrong decisions appears with a definitive clarity, free of all covering veils. The ego is a very complicated mental structure: it is not possible to destroy it, but it can be made transparent. There is a price to pay: there might appear (hours after the practice) inexplicable waves of fear, the sensation of not knowing where you are and where you are directed to. This is a natural reaction coming from some subtle layers of the brain you have touched.

If you feel unfocused or spacey – as if you were under the influence of drugs, experiencing a state of too much *detachment* from the world and from *worldly things* – then it is wise to complete the practice with some repetitions of *Second Kriya*, both the formal part of it (6 repetitions) and the informal part (3 repetitions.)

[IV.3] Brain orbit – comprehensive practice

This practice is the happy crowning of the effort done with the two previous techniques. It makes the cosmic sound of *Om* to naturally rise and be perceived by your enchanted awareness. You will listen only to this. Therefore the mental chanting of *Bha Ga Ba Te Va Su* is of no utility. The same will happen with the following three last procedures. You will focus only upon *Omkar* sound and won't need any *Mantra* chanting.

Focus on *Muladhara*. Inhale deeply and ideally lift this *Chakra* in the central part of the brain, under *Fontanelle*, over *Ajna Chakra*. Visualize that *Chakra* as a disk, large as the circulation of energy that you have previously created.

Feel that the air is squeezed from the abdomen and stored in the upper part of the lungs. Hold your breath and start to put into motion the rotation of the energy in the head just as you have learned to do previously. The rotation of the energy happens in the head but, at the same time, it happens also around the real location of the *Muladhara Chakra* at the base of the spine. Hence, two rotations of energy happen at the same time: it seems difficult but it will become natural. [Remember also that at the end of each circle, the flow of energy is directed inside toward its center.]

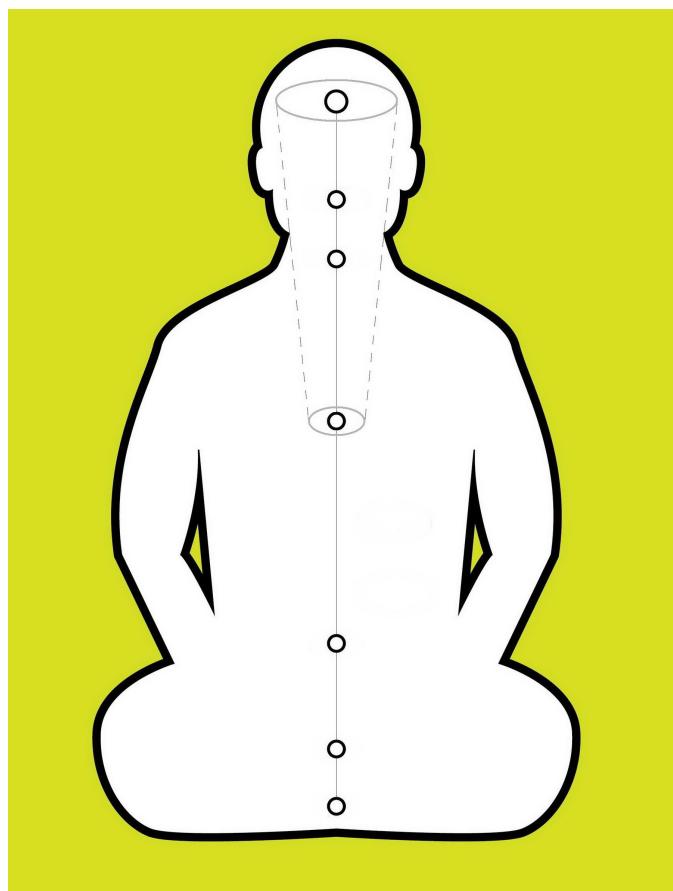


Figure 17. This is the moment in which the Fourth Chakra is lifted. You see the circulation of energy in the upper part of the head and, at the same time, around the heart Chakra

The ideal number of rotations associated with each *Chakra* is 36 but a beginner is contented with a smaller number. Usually the need to breathe will disappear. Exhale when you need to exhale and guide the *Muladhara Chakra* back to its location at the base of the spine.

Inhale raising the second *Chakra* and repeat the procedure. Repeat the procedure for each *Chakra* up to *Ajna*. Repeat it again for *Ajna* and then for all the other *Chakras* down to *Muladhara*. The practice ends by breathing freely, putting all the attention in the *Fontanelle*. Peace, internal joy, breathless state, listening to internal sounds, perceiving the spiritual Light... this is what you will experience. Your practice of *Kriya* will become a love story with Beauty itself. Be sure, be confident: after a certain period of time, a remarkable experience of *Kundalini* awakening will happen. It will overcome you when you rest in the supine position. Without experiencing any start of surprise, you will find yourself ferried from a sweet dream to an authentic heaven; you will return to daily life with tears in your eyes – tears born of endless devotion.

When you master this procedure – when effortless *Kumbhaka* stabilizes and you are able to experience 36 (complete) rotations of *Prana* in your brain for each *Chakra*, namely 432 rotations of energy during 12 *Kumbhaka* – then you will perceive the entire universe filled with the effulgence of Divine Light. The effect is that during the day, a state of never before experienced clarity of mind will surprise you. The foundation of your consciousness will be perceived as a continuous joy, having no reason whatsoever.

Note

It is perfectly natural to approach this practice by slightly rotating your head (and also by mentally chanting the six syllables of the *Mantra*.) Although this is not required, this might be useful for beginners. If this happens, try to move gradually toward physical immobility and toward listening to actual *Omkar* Sound.

[IV.4] Dissolve the breath in Brahmaloka

The 8th *Chakra* is the door that puts you in contact with your astral body. Its opening involves the cleansing of what holds you to the cycle of death and rebirth, namely worn-out psychological patterns. It is the center of spiritual compassion and spiritual selflessness. A *kriyaban* who realizes the essence of this *Chakra* becomes completely selfless and lives with compassion rather than judgment.

Some *Kriya* or *Kundalini Yoga* teachers explain that this *Chakra* is located 5-6 cm. over *Fontanelle*. Other locations are given: 8 cm., 30 cm., 60 cm. We must trust our perception. Let us sweetly swing our trunk and head from side to side with the focus of attention over our head until we feel this *Chakra*. That is the right location!

Inhale, slowly drawing *Prana* from *Muladhara* to the *8th Chakra*. During this procedure, don't focus on any other *Chakra* in the spine. Move up feeling distinctly that the energy crosses the *Fontanelle* and reaches the *8th Chakra*. Concentrate there and enjoy the equilibrium state between inhalation and exhalation. Exhale sweetly, letting *Prana* descend from the *8th Chakra* to *Muladhara*. (Feel distinctly that the energy, coming down, crosses the *Fontanelle*.) When you feel the need to inhale repeat the procedure. Repeat again and again until the state of your consciousness is totally changed and your breath is very subtle, almost non-existent.

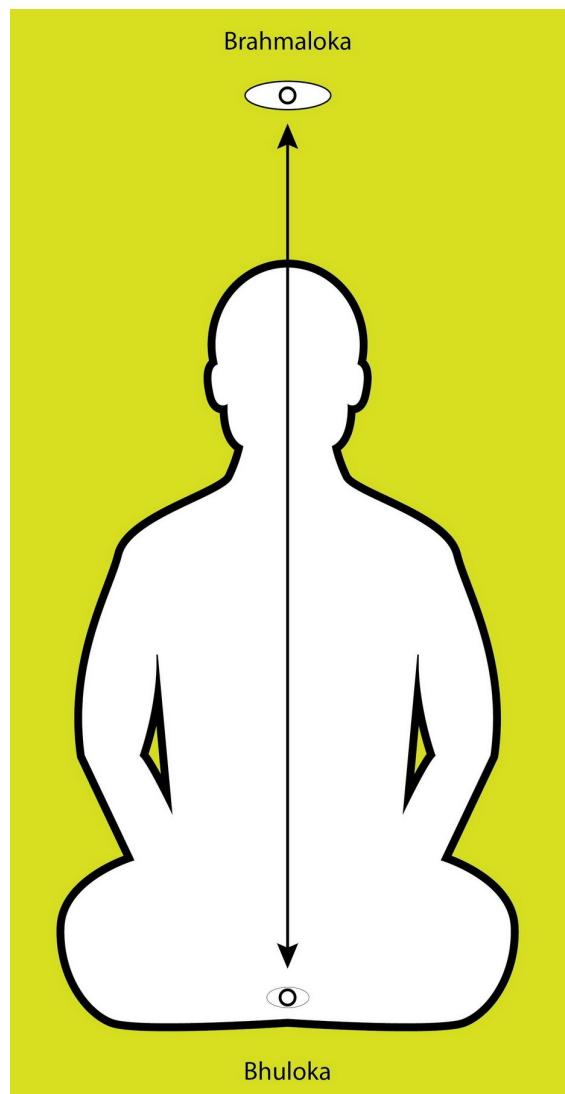


Figure 18. The breath moves between *Bhuloka* and *Brahmaloka* and then dissolves

Now inhale sweetly from *Muladhara* to the *8th Chakra*, raising breath and *Prana*. Exhale sweetly from the *8th Chakra* down the spine, *but do not come down intentionally to the Muladhara Chakra*. You will see that the exhaling current reaches spontaneously a certain point in the spine. This

point is not necessarily one of the different *Chakras*. Wherever this point is, it is fundamental to feel it clearly inside the spine. This point *becomes the starting point of the next inhalation*. Inhale then from this new starting point into the *8th Chakra*. The current comes up through the spine: now the length of the path is obviously shorter. Pause there. Exhale sweetly down the spine: probably the exhaling current makes a shorter path, shorter than the previous. This is the new starting point. Inhale from this new position upwards...

By repeating this procedure, you will reach a particular mental and physical condition in which you will remain breathless, *with total focus on the 8th Chakra*. If, after a long pause, the breath appears again, repeat the process from the beginning (inhaling from *Muladhara*). Go ahead patiently, unperturbed. The point is to make the breath cease, entering a dimension where it is no longer necessary.

[IV.5] Meditation upon the light shining in Cerebellum

Rotate your awareness around the *8th Chakra*. Perceive a ball of Light that makes a circulation around your *8th Chakra* and then touches the center of this *Chakra*. Repeat many times this perception without any mental chanting of *Mantra*. Let the ball of Light do not come inward after tracing one circle but come down, piercing the *Fontanelle* at an angle.

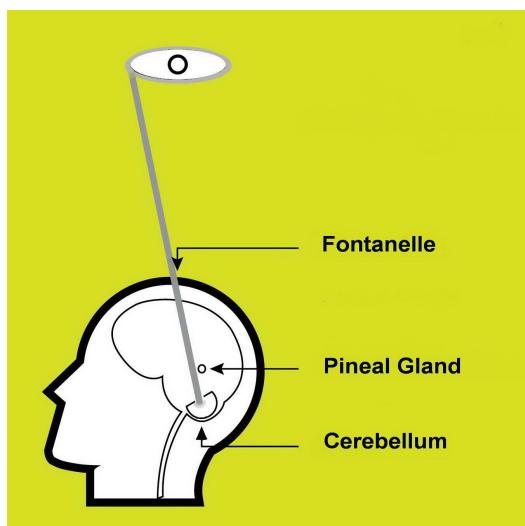


Figure 19. The Light moves from the 8th Chakra to Cerebellum

While the ray is coming down raise your chin and feel the ray of Light reaching your *Cerebellum*. Remain immobile for a few seconds, wholly immersed in the intensity of the dazzling white Light shining from there to the whole brain. Lower your chin without losing the concentration upon the Light. Rest a moment there, and then repeat the procedure. Gradually

during the next days repeat the experience more and more times. The Divine Light becomes stable at the *Cerebellum*.

[IV.6] Meditation upon the light shining in the Pineal Gland

Perceiving constantly the Divine Light in *Cerebellum* is a very high state, but you must learn how to go beyond it. Our goal is to learn to locate your *Pineal Gland* and enter it.

In order to achieve this goal, intuitively condense all the Light in *Cerebellum* and direct it toward your *Pineal Gland*. This gland is located very near the *Cerebellum*, but slightly forward and above it, along a line forming a 60° angle (with the pavement.) A substantial help comes by doing a movement like the one utilized to obtain the coming down of Light and focusing it in the *Cerebellum*, but more slow and almost imperceptible. The movement should be only hinted, with no muscular tension at all. The last immersion in the Light happens after this slight movement, when you are almost immobile: there is a sort of internal tension that guides you intuitively toward the *Pineal Gland*.

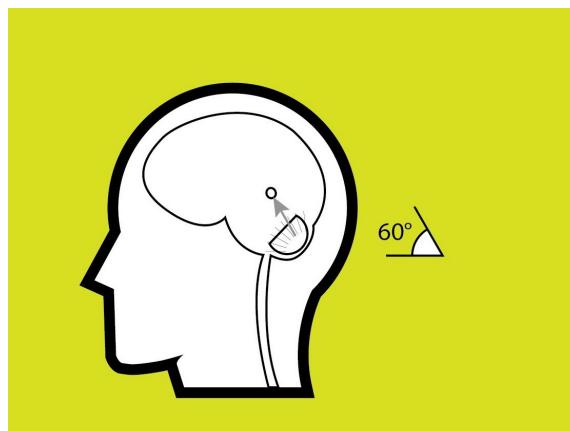


Figure 20. The Light moves from the Cerebellum to the Pineal gland

Repeat and repeat your attempt until you succeed in entering the *Pineal Gland*. Here the union with the Divine takes place. The state of TAT TVAM ASI manifests. During this time of divine oneness, one is devoid of body consciousness and unaware of one's surroundings.

After the Omkar sound ceases to exist
the Effulgent Form appears.
Nothing exists except the Sun of the Soul.
I, Shama Churn, am that Sun. (*Lahiri Mahasaya*) ¹¹

¹¹ Lahiri Mahasaya is Shama Churn – Shyama Charan. This sentence is contained in Lahiri Mahasaya's diaries. Many sentences from the diaries are to be found in the book *Purana Purusha* by Dr. Ashok Kumar Chatterjee

CHAPTER 12

**SOME PROCEDURES AND KRIYA ROUTINES THAT WORK
EFFECTIVELY**

[How to guide a person who desires to start the Kriya Yoga path]

In the second part of the book I have tried to give the reader the opportunity to familiarize with various procedures of the *Kriya Yoga*. I have tried to describe in detail different techniques, perhaps too many techniques. Others can still be found in Appendix 3.

Probably the reader has made some experiments with those different procedures and have noticed that some work (or they seem to work) more than others. I believe that with few techniques the whole spiritual path of the *Kriya Yoga* can be explored. But I have wanted to not censor anything.

However, if I had the intention of teaching *Kriya* to a beginner, which techniques would I choose to share? I certainly desire to see good, solid results. Then the problem is this: how can I conceive a didactic plan in which you start with excellent practices and try to improve them in time?

My vision is that a person, through the practice of *Kriya*, can be born to the *spiritual life*. You know that besides the physical birth (... to feed, to work, to create a family...) and the mental birth (.... to find pleasure in thinking with your own head...) exists the birth to the spiritual life.

Those who are born only to the mental life cannot understand what the birth to the spiritual life is. It rarely happens and when it happens it doesn't consist in the decision to live in a different way, adopting certain rituals and professing a certain faith. The spiritual life doesn't start through a mental effort. A human being must first have a contact with the joy that is in the center of himself/herself. That joy is somehow related with the spine, with the spiritual centers that are found in it and with the intuitive vision that happens through the "third eye." Sometimes the contact with the internal beatitude is accompanied by the experience of a strong tide of energy in the spine. The experience is sometimes preceded by inexplicable fear, sometimes by real anguish. I think that the reader has familiarity with these events.

I was talking about a possible "didactic plan." The reader knows that for various reasons I have decided to devote soul and body to make a search about the *Kriya Pranayama* as taught by Lahiri Mahasaya. I am obliged to take my past experiences with it as a guide. I can not act differently. I have practiced and made experience with many procedures of this *Kriya Yoga* and I have also followed the progress of some people. I think I know which are the procedures that work splendidly.

A good didactic plan must envisage a serious work of equilibrium between *Ida* and *Pingala*, a great attempt at perceiving the location of the *Chakras*, at awakening them all with particular care about four of them: *Muladhara*, *Manipura*, *Anahata* and *Ajna Chakra*.

Muladhara Chakra is the door to enter the spine and waken *Kundalini*; *Manipura* is the key to awaken *Samana* current and come near to the subtle breath and to breathless state; *Anahata* opens the doors to the *Omkar* experience; *Ajna Chakra* is the door to enter the dimension beyond astral and causal bodies and put an end to all our illusions.

Now, considering the teachings of different *Kriya* schools, we see an excessive prudence in teaching effective tools that point at awakening the *Muladhara Chakra*. All the other *Chakras* are seriously taken into account. The work upon *Muladhara Chakra* is only hinted.

It seems that many are afraid of using effective tools to open the door of the spine. I believe that there are no serious reasons to cultivate such fear. Let us avoid thinking that *Muladhara* and *Kundalini* be a source of troubles!! *Kundalini* is the vital energy present in the body. It is true that when it enters *Sushumna* it has an overwhelming effect that recalls the image of a snake that awakes and blows, but we have not any right to fear the *Kundalini* energy that is the very essence of the spiritual experiences.

In the following didactic plan you will find some procedures that produce a strong stimulus on the *Muladhara Chakra* and create the opportunity of guiding *Kundalini* energy up and down along the spine. This last possibility is always achieved after having created a condition of energetic balance between *Ida* and *Pingala*. This practice has helped me to die to my past life and to enter a dimension that can falsely appear as austere, while in reality is made of true Beauty.

Now I introduce four routines that can be mastered during few years. They are really effective. To illustrate them I will make reference both to *Kriya* techniques already explained in the preceding chapters and to other procedures learned and tested in these last years. All I can say is that there is really something great in them.

Each routine is accompanied by a variation which contains something more difficult to practice.

About Sri Mukherjee

His *Kriya Pranayama* is insuperable, but I practice it after the preparation that I am going to explain in the first routine.

The period in which I blindly obeyed to the precise injunctions of the various Acharyas has ended. In my routine the *Kriya Pranayama* is preceded by the *Forward bendings* taught by Swami Hariharananda and by a particular work to win the obstacle at the base of the spine. Techniques such as *Nadi Sodhana Pranayama*, *Tadan Kriya*, *Kapalabhati*, *Bhramari Pranayama* and, obviously, other austere forms of *Kriya* find place in the routines that I propose. Inside this frame of reference, the *Kriya Pranayama* as taught by Sri Mukherjee remains always the paradisiac experience that is perfection in itself, and that, with a right attitude, you can always try to master indefinitely.

When in the following routines you find "*Kriya Pranayama (basic)*" I mean the technique *Kriya Pranayama* as taught by Sri Mukherjee.

FIRST ROUTINE

This routine finds its strong point in the idea of conceiving a good preparation for the *Kriya Pranayama* – so good that the mind calms down automatically because you work mainly in opening delicately the spinal passage located in the *Muladhara Chakra*. Such preparation doesn't require a lot of time – no more than 12 minutes.

When you have completed this preparation, before practicing *Kriya Pranayama*, you are already in an ecstatic state with a very calm breath. Therefore the ensuing practice of *Kriya Pranayama* becomes very, very deep.

Routine n.1

Preparation part 1: Forward bendings (6-12)

Prep. part 2: Kriya Pranayama with Japa rotating in Kutastha (12)

Prep. part 3: Nadi Sodhana with inverted breath & Tadan Kriya

Kriya Pranayama (basic) (36)

Prep. part 4: Guiding Kundalini

Kriya Pranayama (basic) (72)

Mental Pranayama

Explanation of the different procedures of Routine 1

Preparation part 1: Forward bendings (6-12)

Before describing the "Forward Bendings" let me remind that one cannot start a *Kriya* routine by simply sitting in the correct position for meditation. It is important to practice some exercises to awaken the *Prana* in the body. At least stroll casually ... few minutes are sufficient.

► Through a deep inhalation visualize the breath coming from the physical location of *Muladhara* up the spine until you complete the breath at *Ajna*. Hold your breath. Bend at the waist and touch the floor with your head. Use your hands freely in order to achieve this position comfortably.

Move your head near the right knee – the face is turned toward the left knee so that it is possible to perceive a pressure on the right side of the head; a sensation of space is perceived inside the left side of the brain. Remain in this position for 3 to 30 seconds.

Then repeat the same exercise with the other side of your body, reversing the perceptions. Then the head is placed in the region between the knees again, the face turned downward. A pressure is felt on the forehead. A sensation of space is perceived inside the occipital region.

Then sit up straight, inhaling deeply. Through a long exhalation let the energy go down from *Ajna* to *Muladhara*. Practice six of these forward bendings.

- The "Forward Bendings" as taught by Swami Hariharananda are explained in Chapter 11. In this Chapter 12 when I recall an already explained procedure, I do it in a synthetic form. It is clear that reading again the Chapters of the second part of the book is a wise idea. In Chapter 11 you will find also Swami Hariharananda's fantastic *Maha Mudra*.

The forward bendings are useful not only as a preparation to *Kriya* but also for ameliorating your standing position, correcting wrong positions. For many old persons the forward bending can replace the *Maha Mudra*.

Prep. part 2: Kriya Pranayama with Japa rotating in Kutastha (12)

If you want to practice the *Kriya Pranayama (basic)* you must know how to make your awareness be stable in *Kutastha*. The recommended exercise is based upon *Japa* and upon perceiving something like a *micro movement* in *Kutastha*.

We know how important is the practice of *Japa* especially when practiced a couple of hours before starting the *Kriya* routine. It creates a condition very favorable to an entranced contemplation of the Spiritual Reality.

Through the simple procedure "*Japa rotating in Kutastha*" we can get back the essence of our practice of the *Japa* done the present day or the day before. All efforts of internalization will be more successful.

► Let us consider the practice of *Kriya Pranayama*. Let us create a particular pause after inhalation and during this pause let us mentally chant our favored *Mantra* perceiving that this *Mantra* is something that rotates in the sphere of *Kutastha*.

What does "something that rotates" mean? You have surely seen those acrobats that ride a motorbike inside a sphere made of solid steel armor. They cross the inside part of the sphere along all the directions winning the strength of gravity. Well you make pretense that your *Kutastha* is a sphere in whose internal part you make your *Mantra* rotate. Do this until you feel a sensation of movement in the center between your eyebrows.

Prep. part 3: Nadi Sodhana with inverted breath & Tadan Kriya

These two techniques have a decisive power to foster the free movement of *Prana* through *Sushumna*. A *kriyaban* will find great benefit by practicing every day these two exercises with inflexible determination.

Nadi Sodhana (inverted)

Focus on the *Muladhara Chakra*. Close the right nostril and inhale through the left nostril while mentally chanting *Om* 3 times. Visualize that you are attracting the energy contained in the inhaled air and bring this energy down around your *Muladhara*. Close both nostrils and mentally chant *Om* 6 times while holding your breath. At the same time apply *Maha Bandha*. Then exhale through the right nostril mentally chanting *Om* 6 times.

[*Maha Bandha* means to apply the three basic *Bandhas*. The three *Bandhas* are:

Mula Bandha: contract the muscles at the base of the spine

Uddiyana Bandha: draw inside the abdominal muscles by contracting them

Jalandhara Bandha: lower the chin on the chest]

Repeat the procedure inhaling through the right nostril, pause with *Bandhas* and exhale from the left nostril. These two breaths count as one unity. Practice only three unities. In the future you can increase such number with caution. During this procedure the concentration on the *Muladhara Chakra* is the most important detail. This exercise finds its natural completion in *Tadan Kriya*.

Tadan

Inhale deeply through both nostrils feeling the breath coming down to *Muladhara*. Hold your breath and practice the three *Bandhas*. Lift your body, with the help of the hands, of few millimeters and then let the buttocks touch the seat with a mild jolt. Have three jolts – be sure that you are holding your breath during them! Then exhale, slowly and deeply, releasing the three *Bandhas*, perceiving an ecstatic feeling. This detail is very important: it is a signal that the *Prana* has entered the spine and *Kundalini* starts its travel upwards. The mental energy (not just the physical action) that you put in this exercise is a decisive factor. The action of *Tadan Kriya* is called *Maha Veda Mudra* "Mudra of the great perforation." Repeat the practice of *Tadan* two more times for a total of 9 jolts.

Kriya Pranayama (basic) (36)

I counsel to break our *Kriya Pranayama* into two parts (36+72): the reason is now explained.

It is difficult for a beginner to face the practice of 108 *Kriya* breaths. I cannot say that it is impossible because the *Kriya Pranayama (basic)* is very natural and

doesn't require an excessive effort. Nevertheless new *kriyabans* have the tendency to shorten it or to relinquish it, in time.

Now, when, after preparation 1, 2 and 3, you practice 36 *Kriya* breaths, the following preparation technique 4 "Guiding *Kundalini*" has a fantastic outcome. You will be stunned how easy is to perceive the *Chakras* and to calm the breath.

Therefore the following 72 *Kriya* breaths will happen in the best conditions.

Prep. part 4: Guiding *Kundalini*

In this procedure, the breath is utilized to guide *Kundalini* along an internal path known as "Small Heavenly Orbit" in Internal alchemy. To complete one round you utilize 12 particular breaths: six deep inhalations, each one followed by a fast exhalation & six deep exhalations, each one prepared by a rapid inhalation. Three cycles are recommend, but even one single cycle has a fantastic effect. Don't complicate the procedure, which should be always natural and pleasant. It is not necessary to mental chant *Om* in the *Chakras*!

- While *Nadi Sodhana* with inverse breath and *Tadan* are always practiced together, this exercise can be practiced independently. You will surely love it and will practice it, in different moments of your *Kriya* routine, every time you will feel the need to center in the internal state of calmness. When you experience the effect of this procedure you won't ask why this techniques should be practiced but why you have not practiced it before.

From now onwards I give for granted that you keep your tongue in *baby Kechari position*. Of course practice *Kechari* proper if you are able to assume this position of the tongue.

First part: coming up

Take a deep, strong inhalation, marked by the particular sound of *Ujjayi*. The length is about 4 seconds. Attract the energy from your body into the first *Chakra*. Feel *Kundalini* in the first *Chakra* and exhale rapidly with mouth open "huh."¹² The length of the exhalation is about half second. During this exhalation *Kundalini* remains in the first *Chakra*.

Now take a deep, strong *Ujjayi* inhalation – the length is about 4 seconds. Feel that the energy comes upward from the first *Chakra* to the second. After feeling *Kundalini* in the second *Chakra* exhale rapidly with mouth open "huh." The length of the exhalation is about half second. During this exhalation *Kundalini* remains in the second *Chakra*.

The procedure is repeated guiding *Kundalini* from the base of the spine to the third *Chakra*. [It is not necessary to perceive *Kundalini* crossing distinctly the

¹² The sound is the same you produce with your mouth when you want to fog up a glass.

second *Chakra*.]

The procedure is repeated guiding *Kundalini* from the base of the spine to the fourth *Chakra*. [It is not necessary to perceive *Kundalini* crossing distinctly the second and third *Chakra*.]

The procedure is repeated guiding *Kundalini* from the base of the spine to the fifth *Chakra*. [It is not necessary to perceive *Kundalini* crossing distinctly the second, third and fourth *Chakra*.]

The procedure is repeated guiding *Kundalini* from the base of the spine to *Ajna Chakra*. [It is not necessary to perceive *Kundalini* crossing distinctly the second, third, fourth and fifth *Chakra*.]

Second part: going down.

The procedure of going down is symmetric to the procedure of going up – you have only to reverse the role of inhalation and exhalation.

Take a rapid inhalation through the nose. The length is about 1 second. Feel that *Kundalini* is present in the seventh *Chakra* – the "Thousand petal lotus." Now you have a deep, strong *Ujjayi* exhalation – the length is about 4 seconds. Feel that the energy of *Kundalini* comes down from the seventh *Chakra* to the spiritual eye in the space between the eyebrows.

Take a rapid inhalation through the nose. The length is about 1 second. Feel that *Kundalini* is present in the seventh *Chakra*. Now with a deep *Ujjayi* exhalation (the length is about 4 seconds) you feel that the *Kundalini* energy comes down from the seventh *Chakra* to the frontal part of the fifth *Chakra*: the Adam's apple.

The procedure is repeated guiding *Kundalini* from the seventh *Chakra* to the frontal part of the fourth *Chakra* – the central part of the breast bone. The procedure is repeated guiding *Kundalini* from the seventh *Chakra* to the frontal part of the third *Chakra* – the navel. The procedure is repeated guiding *Kundalini* from the seventh *Chakra* to the frontal part of the second *Chakra*. The procedure is repeated guiding *Kundalini* from the seventh *Chakra* to the base of the spine – the seat of *Muladhara*.

- In Routine 4 we shall become familiar with an important variation of this procedure. We shall learn that during the conscious descent of *Kundalini*, an important event may happen. One becomes able to infuse the cells of his/her body with "eternal life."

Kriya Pranayama (basic) (72)

Thanks to the procedure "*Guiding Kundalini*" this final part of *Kriya Pranayama* will be fantastic.

You will not suffer from that particular problem that is called "Plateau Effect." The Plateau Effect is this: an exercise up to a certain moment seems effective, from a moment onwards seems not to work anymore. Our concentration faculties don't succeed in answering to the procedure that we are following and you can falsely think that there is no possible improvement in store for you or that we ourselves are a total failure. This effect is potentially destructive.

Now, if after 36 breaths, you apply the procedure "*Guiding Kundalini*" you will have a great surprise. *Kriya Pranayama* will happen in an extraordinary way. If you don't have your mind destroyed by a chaotic life, you will experience a real heaven.

You will succeed in "seeing" the *Chakras*. You will perceive that all the parts of your being are ideally focused in a sphere situated between *Kutastha* and *Ajna*. In this sphere you will perceive the lights [these lights seem weak but they bring great internal realization] of the different *Chakras*. This will be a stupendous moment of the practice.

Mental Pranayama

This procedure is explained in the end part of chapter 6. I recall it synthetically.

After three deep breaths, let your breath be natural and forget it. Move your awareness up and down the spine pausing in each spinal center for about 10-20 seconds. Try to catch the sweetness emanating from each *Chakra*. It does not suffice to keep on exerting a mental and even physical pressure on each *Chakra*, unable to relax. Do not complicate the teaching! Be simple.

Try to maintain the awareness in each *Chakra* until a sensation of sweetness is felt, as if the *Chakra* were "melting". It is important you assume a passive attitude and patient as well, with total reliance on what will be revealed by the practice itself.

– end of routine 1 –

Wait at least a couple of months before facing the following variation of Routine 1. If you have time, study also chapter 6. This will help you to understand the explanation of Sri Mukherjee's way of practicing *Kriya*. In chapter 6 you will also find the explanation of the "*Mental Pranayama*."

The following variation of the previous Routine is really valuable. I wish you can enjoy it and reach (when your body is ready) the breathless state

Routine n.1 BIS

Four preparations: part 1, 2, 3 and 4

+

Kriya Pranayama (basic) (36)

Kriya Pranayama with Focus in Fontanelle (36)

Kriya Pranayama with Focus on the fourth Chakra Anahata (36)

+

Short breath between Muladhara and each Chakra

Explanation of the new procedures

As you see, there are three new procedures to learn:

Kriya Pranayama with Focus in Fontanelle

Practicing the following procedure (it was already explained in chapter 7) is not difficult: you need only to guide your awareness and energy to the summit of the head and remain stable there. Therefore, the chant of *Om 6+6* happens only in the *Fontanelle*.

As it regards the purpose of entering *Sushumna*, we know for direct experience that the practice of *Aswini Mudra* is insuperable in its power to make you touch with the awareness of the spinal cord. Therefore, when you feel yourself ready, try to introduce a continuous *Aswini Mudra* during *Kriya Pranayama*. "Continuous" means: during the inhalation and during the exhalation.

There are different definitions of *Aswini Mudra*. The standard definition is to repeatedly contract the muscles at the base of the spine (anal sphincter) with the rhythm of around two contractions a second. While learning the technique, you contract the buttock muscles, perineum or even the entire pelvic region also; with time, the contraction involves only the sphincter muscles.

This *Mudra* is a direct way of obtaining a perceptive contact with the energy at the base of the spine. This energy is pushed up within the spine. Little by little *Aswini Mudra* will become more and more subtle – namely it will become just a mental pressure along the whole spine. You start to clearly perceive the totality of *Sushumna* like something cool and bright as a silver thread.

The sound of the *Kriya* breath (it is like a "flute") will intensify the process of *Kundalini* awakening. This process starts when you perceive the authentic vibration of the *Omkar* sound. This will undoubtedly happen if you practice the required number of repetitions.

The exercise is very gratifying. You will perceive a white light, diffused, in the upper part of your head. A beautiful sensation of fresh air that comes up crossing each *Chakras* will make you feel filled with energy. A sweet warm that goes down permeating every zone of the body from top to bottom will infuse a great feeling of comfort. The practice seems to have a life of its own.

Sometimes you will have the impression you are crossing a mental state, that is similar to falling asleep and suddenly returning to full awareness, realizing that you are basking in the spiritual light. It's like a plane emerging from clouds into a clear transparent sky.

Kriya Pranayama with Focus on the fourth Chakra Anahata

During the last 36 *Kriya* breaths, the *Oms* (6+6) are mentally chanted in the *Anahata Chakra*. That's all.

Short breath between Muladhara and each Chakra

Have three deep breaths. Detach mentally from the idea of being involved in the practice of an exercise. Be natural and observe what happens in your body.

Focus the attention on the *Muladhara*. When it comes natural to inhale, inhale without forcing the breath and pause an instant in the second *Chakra*. Try to have a good perception of this *Chakra*. Exhale when it comes natural to exhale and focus again on *Muladhara*. Make a short pause. When it comes natural to inhale, inhale without forcing the breath and pause an instant in the *Third Chakra*. Try to have a good perception of this *Chakra*. Exhale when it comes natural to exhale and focus again on the *Muladhara*.

Repeat the procedure between the *Muladhara* and the fourth *Chakra*; *Muladhara* and the fifth *Chakra*; *Muladhara* and *Bindu*; *Muladhara* and *Medulla*; *Muladhara* and fifth *Chakra*; *Muladhara* - fourth *Chakra*; *Muladhara* - third *Chakra*; *Muladhara* – *Second Chakra*. These 10 calm breaths are one cycle. If at this point your breath has not drastically calmed down, you practice one or two cycles more.

Note

If you have great difficulty with this last procedure, resume here the practice of the technique [IV] "*Guiding Kundalini*". Repeat slowly such procedure and you will remain amazed to ascertain how calmness it succeeds in creating.

– end of routine 1 BIS –



SECOND ROUTINE

The second Routine embodies the idea to improve the *Kriya Pranayama* by expanding the pause of the breath that happens after the inhalation. During such pause we practice *Maha Bandha* and give a strong stimulus to the *Anahata Chakra*.

Giving a hit to the *Anahata Chakra* (or to the other *Chakras* – usually the lower *Chakras* *Muladhara*, *Swadhisthana* and *Manipura*) means to focus on that *Chakra* while at the same time come down with a sharp movement of the chin toward the physical location of that *Chakra*. This hitting (strike, blow... are synonyms) is called "THOKAR."

THOKAR HAPPENS WHILE MAHA BANDHA IS INTENSIFIED.

In such a way we force some obstacle to the flow of the energy in *Sushumna*.

This way to practice the *Kriya Pranayama* has not been taught by Sri Mukherjee. I have learned it from other sources. But is clear that I don't renounce to the teaching of Sri Mukherjee. In fact what he has theoretically explained on the *Second level of Kriya* is here realized in an impressive way. Try this Routine and you will see that you are on the right path to realize the *Second Kriya*.

Second Routine

Preparation: part [I], [II], [III], [IV]

Kriya Pranayama (basic) (12-24)

Kriya Pranayama with Maha Bandha (Elementary form of Thokar) [*]

Cross shaped Pranayama [*]

[*] new parts

Explanation of the new parts

[Preparation: part [I], [II], [III], [IV] // Kriya Pranayama (basic) (12-24) //]

Kriya Pranayama with Maha Bandha (Elementary form of Thokar)

Practice *Kriya Pranayama*. [You can utilize the mental chant of *Om* but also the Vasudeva Mantra *Om Na Mo Bha Ga Ba Te Va Su De Va Ya.*] After inhaling hold your breath. Bend the head to the left (without turning you face to the left), guide your awareness within the right part of the head (it is the part which in this moment remains aloft.) Then, always holding your breath, bend your head to the right intensifying the concentration on the left part of the head. Always holding, lower the chin on the breast and practice the *Maha Bandha* and *Thokar* upon the heart *Chakra Anahata*.

Push the energy upward and perceive an intensification of *Prana* in the fourth *Chakra*. Then, always holding your breath, relax the *Bandhas* and lift the chin upwards (as looking at the ceiling) perceiving light in the region between *Kutastha* and *Fontanelle*.

Once you have perceived the light, start sweetly to lower you chin. While you reach the normal horizontal position you perceive the *Medulla*. A slow exhalation injects the divine light in *Sushumna* through *Medulla*. Descending from the top of the head this Light "pierces" one after the other the *Chakras*. The mental chanting the syllables of the *Mantra* helps you to feel more clearly this "piercing process." Repeat at least 36 times.

Cross shaped Pranayama

Practice some *Kriya* breaths in the following way. When you inhale, feel a movement of energy that goes from the left part of the body toward the right part, to it it follows during the exhalation a movement of energy that moves from the right part of the body toward the left part. To this breath, the classical breath *Kriya* in which energy moves aloft from the lower part and from top down it follows. You continue in this way alternating the two kind of breaths. You need only from 6 breaths to clearly feel the location of the *Anahata Chakra*. Practice 18 couples of breaths.

Comment to the second Routine

Kriya Pranayama as it is practiced in this second Routine, or in the following variations, envisages the procedure of holding the breath.

Imagine two hands united in Prayer (position of Indian salutation.) The left hand represents the coming up of the energy during the inhalation, the right

hand represents the descent of the energy during the exhalation. Image now that they detach him and create a space in between the two. Such space represents the moment in which you hold the breath. Well, in this space the obstacles to the flow of the energy along the spinal channel of Sushumna can be unfastened.

The simple effort that the second Routine requires, means first to perceive, during the *Maha Bandha*, that the energy is pushed aloft from the base of the spine toward the *Chakra* of the heart. Then you perceive in the upper part of your head the Divine Light. During the exhalation you will clearly feel how the energy, in its descent, crosses each *Chakra*.

As for the final technique, you will learn to love it and you will utilize it during the day.



SECOND ROUTINE – VARIATION

(SPECIFIC FOR THOSE WHO HAVE EXPERIENCE OF THE TRIBHANGAMURARI MOVEMENT)

Routine n.2 Bis

Preparation: part [I], [II]

Kriya Pranayama (basic)

Kriya Pranayama merged with Thokar Tribhangamurari (36) [*]

Micro movement Tribhangamurari with short breath [*]

[*] new parts

Explanation of the new parts

[Preparation: part [I], [II] // Kriya Pranayama (basic)]

Kriya Pranayama merged with Thokar Tribhangamurari

Kriya Pranayama means inhaling and exhaling: the energy goes up and then comes down. Have you ever tried to let, during the exhalation, the energy go down along the *Tribhangamurari* path? This can be done easily. Very powerful are the effects if you do this while holding your breath. During the pause after having inhaled with the mental chanting of *Om Na Mo Bha Ga Ba*, hold the breath and come down with the awareness along the *Tribhangamurari* path. The

movements of the head are those explained in Chapter 10. The mental chanting is obviously *Te Va Su De Va Ya*.

Since you are holding your breath, something particular happens. The head moves in a way to touch with force the sixth *Chakra*, then the face turns to right and left. This has a good effect upon unblocking the fifth *Chakra*. The three final blows, stimulate the three inferior *Chakras* and, at the same time send their energies to the heart *Chakra*. When you think *De Va Ya*, you feel that something enters the heart from the left.

After chanting *Ya*, the exhalation starts. At this point you create a fine "eeee..." sound in the throat. Feel that a white light is coming down along the back of the spine. You might feel heat. (N.B. During this exhalation you don't utilize the *Tribhangamurari* path.)

The practice is so beautiful that often you will enter the ecstatic state during the practice itself.

Micro movement Tribhangamurari with short breath

At the starting point of your spiritual path you have learned to create a mental pressure upon one single point: *Kutastha*. This is to put a stable basis to your *Kriya* practice. Now you must learn to put mental pressure inside each *Chakra*. This procedure opens the *Rudra Granti* door situated in *Muladhara*.

a) Activate the *Micro movement Tribhangamurari* by whispering the twelve syllable *Mantra* in each center starting with *Muladhara* and making a whole round up and down, pausing in each center. In this first phase forget the breath.

What do you think/visualize when you whisper the *Mantra*? While you whisper *Om Na Mo Bha Ga Ba* you feel that you are inside the first *Chakra*, only there, and you are creating a moving sensation in it, precisely from the back of *Chakra* to the front, horizontally as regards to the spine. [See chapter 10] While you mentally chant *Te Va Su De Va Ya* you feel that you are creating a small three-curve movement inside *Muladhara* – precisely from the frontal part of that *Chakra* to the back part of it. Have the same experience inside each one of the centers contained in the *Macro Movement* – see figure 13.

b) Repeat the whole process but utilize your breath. Start with *Muladhara*. Inhale a subtle breath mentally chanting *Om Na Mo Bha Ga Ba*. Feel a moving sensation from the back of that *Chakra* to the front of it. Then exhale a subtle breath while mentally chanting *Te Va Su De Va Ya*. Accompany with your concentration the three-curve movement inside *Muladhara* – precisely from the frontal part of that *Chakra* to the back part of it. Go ahead in this way.

c) Make the procedure more and more subtle. The breath will disappear. Not only that: through patient repetition, touching all the centers, *Kutastha* and *Anahata*

Chakra WILL BECOME ONE and you will enjoy a particular ecstatic experience.

I don't want to utilize many words and rhetoric to praise the procedure of the *Micro movement Tribhangamurari*. However, I am serious in affirming that I do not know another so powerful tool in internalizing your awareness, making you forget time and space.

Note: before practicing the third routine

Become familiar with the technique "*Bhramari Pranayama*." It is considered a good way to induce *Pratyahara* (withdrawal of the senses.) Read any remark that you can find in the net about this technique.

Let us consider this simple guide to *Bhramari Pranayama*: utilize the indexes to close the ears practicing a pressure on the tragus of the ears. Focus the attention on *Ajna Chakra*. Inhale a normal breath. Exhale slowly producing a humming, long and continuous sound as that of a bee. The sound reverberates in the head. Repeat various times.

THIRD ROUTINE

The instrument "*Advanced Form of Thokar*" is very effective especially if it is completed by the procedure "*Navi Kundalini*."

The first instrument has in itself all the power of the *Sufi* mysticism while the second has in itself the power of the *Tibetan Dummo (Tummo.)* There are no doubts: they work!

The great problem that we will face it is that the method "*Advanced form of Thokar*" is difficult to explain. There exist different variations of it. I will explain an alternative version to the one described in Chapter 9 and I will improve my explanation subsequently until mental strength and life will remain.

Third Routine

Preparation: part [I], [II], [III]
Kriya Pranayama (basic) (12-24)
Navi Kriya or Kapalabhati [*]
Advanced form of Thokar [*]
Navi Kundalini [*]
Short breath centered in Anahata [*]
Guiding Omkar into Anahata [*]

[*] new part

Explanation of the new parts

[Preparation: part [I], [II], [III] // Kriya Pranayama (basic)]

Navi Kriya or Kapalabhati

Kriya Yoga recommends that when you are going to practice a technique that requires holding your breath, you should first activate the *Samana* current through *Navi Kriya* and/or *Kapalabhati Pranayama*. Choose one of the two. [Navi Kriya is explained in chapter 7.]

Kapalabhati

Perform inhalation and exhalation rapidly; exhalation should be done by contracting the abdominal muscles forcibly and quickly, resulting in a backward push. Exhalation and inhalation alternate with equal lengths and occur about two

times per second. The navel acts as a pump and it's almost like using the abdomen as bellows. The most important point to remember is that inhalation is passive: as soon as the air is thrown out, the abdominal muscles are relaxed and inhalation comes automatically. The sound slightly resembles blowing one's empty nose. During each expulsion, *Prana* is sent to the navel. After 15-20 short exhalations, there is a pause and the breath resumes its normal rhythm. Then you practice two more cycles of 15-20 short breaths.

Now you are ready to practice the following *Advanced form of Thokar*.

Advanced form of Thokar

You can practice this technique as it is explained in Chapter 9. Inhale, hold ... *Te Va Su*, *Te Va Su* many, many rotations of the head... During these rotations you chant *Te* in *Medulla*, *Va* in the cervical and *Su* in the heart *Chakra*...

If you feel that this way to practice *Thokar* is familiar to you, choose this. I describe you what has been given to me as original. I believe that the "original" techniques are many because Lahiri Mahasaya made different experiments. What matters is the practical experience. A good *Thokar* should allow you to feel the *Prana* in the heart or the sensation of a great joy coupled with the feeling of joyful intoxication. What I give here works and is completed because it involves the first 4 *Chakras*.

I say that this express train in the chapter 9 work. Here in the chapter 12 otherwise explain in how much the present way involves the first 4 Chakras. You must be a mature person that decides after experience.

Spiegazione: Inhale deeply and come up with the awareness... Om, Na, Mo, Bha, Ga, Ba (Ba is in Bindu.) Your hands are interwoven upon the navel. The chin comes up with your awareness.

Now enter a particular state for which you are prepared (because of the good effect of the previous techniques.) In this state you are neither in a perfect breathless state nor in a state of normal breath. You are in the state of "subtle breath." What does this mean? You will soon understand. Through *Thokar* you are going to touch deeply the nucleus of the *Chakras* and this action will dissolve your breath. This will happen indeed and you will see it.

Let me explain this *Thokar*. Inhale a subtle breath and then hold your breath, nay, let your breath dissolve spontaneously. The movements of the head are easy to understand. You come down from the sixth center moving the head to the left of few millimeters, then return to the center with chin slightly up. Perceive the cervical *Chakra*. Without stopping, turn your face toward right. The chin comes down a little bit in order to touch the front part of the right shoulder. There is no stress in this movement. Vibrate "Teee" in the point at the right (see in the figure.) Then move slowly to the symmetrical position and chant "Va" in the correct point that you see at left.

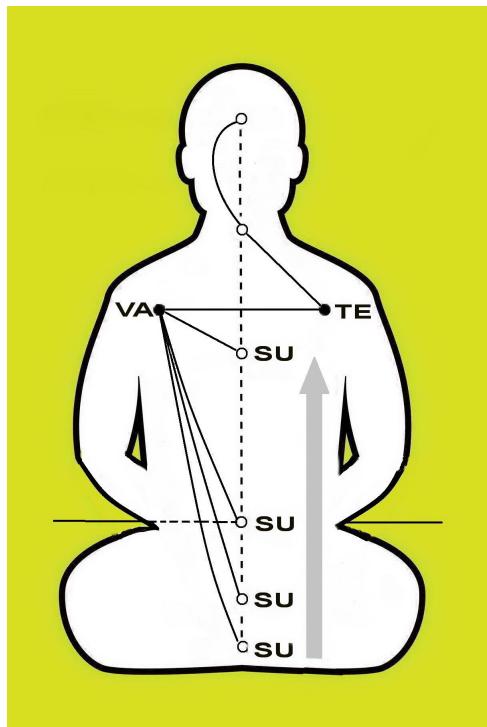


Figure 21. The person in figure is seen from behind.
First part of the procedure. Thokar happens upon Chakras 1, 2, 3, and 4

From this position there is a movement of the chin to hit the *Muladhara Chakra*. Then the head returns to the departing position (each time you start from *Bindu*) and comes down to hit the second *Chakra*. Then the third, then the fourth. At the end of this action you exhale while mentally repeating *De Va Ya*. Then breath naturally. Repeat the procedure many times according to the time at your disposal or according to your intuition.

What does it mean vibrate *Teee* in the point that you see in figure and vibrate the syllable *Va* in the symmetric point? It means to vibrate them in the upper part of the right lung and in the upper part of the left lung, respectively. Obviously the syllable *Su* is always vibrated in the center of the *Chakra* you are hitting.

All we have explained is the first part of the procedure. When you feel you are ready to practice something very intense, move to the second part described below.

You have stimulated the first *Chakra*, then the second, then the third, then the fourth. The energy is present in the first four *Chakras*. Now we must invite *Kundalini* to become settled in the fourth *Chakra*.

In this second part you will hit many times the fourth *Chakra*. The method is always the same (starting each movement from *Bindu*) but here we should become able to eliminate the necessity of breathing in order to repeat many of these movements.

In practice: after having raised your awareness, hold your breath – namely, let it dissolve. Come down with the movements of the head that we have explained before and repeat *Te*, *Va*, *Su* in the already specified points (now *Su* is placed only in the heart) and come up again in *Bindu* and repeat (always holding your breath) ... and again repeat – many times.

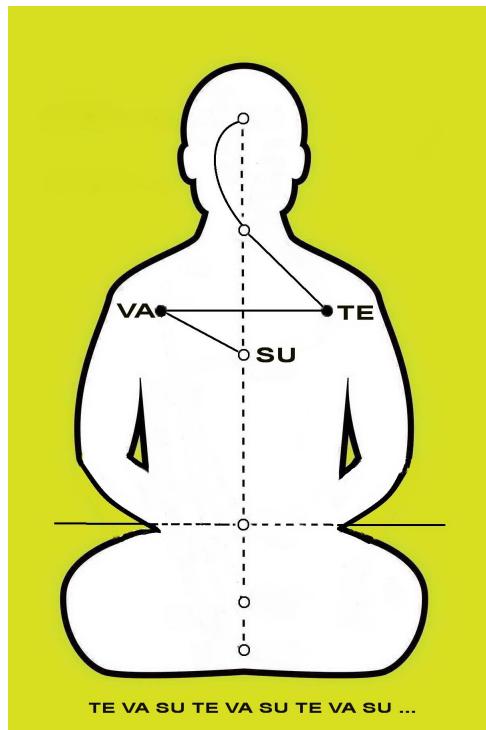


Figure 21b. Second part of the procedure

How many times will you be able to mentally repeat *Te Va Su* without breathing? 20, 30...100...? Your intuition will guide you. What I have written in Chapter 9 can now be useful. Let me remind here the essential points adjusting them to this present form of *Thokar*.

While inhaling, mentally repeat *Om, Na, Mo...* and raise the *Prana* into the upper part of the lungs. The muscles of the thoracic cage are only partially relaxed as if you were going to begin a new inhalation. Focus your attention on the upper part of your rib cage. In this mental and physical state you will repeat many *Te, Va, Su*.

When you feel you have neared your limit holding your breath, while keeping the chest expanded and the abdominal muscles and diaphragm contracted and immobile, let a minimal (almost imperceptible) sip of air go out whenever the

chin is lowered toward the chest and let an imperceptible sip of air enter whenever the chin is brought up. Do not do any specific act of inhaling or exhaling: relax and allow this phenomenon happen of its own accord. The sensation will always be of not breathing at all.

Thanks to the effect of this practice, one day you will be able to complete 200 movements of the head without breathing and without hurry. You will experience a state of consciousness characterized by heightened feeling of freedom from physical laws. It is a matter of inner realization – an instinct which is discovered in time.

Navi Kundalini [don't mistake it for Navi Kriya!]

You find this technique described in Chapter 9. We have said that this technique is the "*Vase breathing*" of the *Tibetan Yoga*. Breath and energy enter through the nostrils and reach the *Dantian* region (please read the technique again.) You practice the three *Bandhas* and intensify the pressure upon the *Dantian* region. Then, while you exhale, you feel that the energy comes up into your head with a Bliss sensation. Repeat this exercise many times. Make it more and more subtle. Relax perfectly.

Short breath centered in Anahata

Now you are calming your breath not to enter the final part of your routine but to prepare yourself to practice two higher *Kriya* procedures: the *Advanced form of Thokar* and *Navi Kundalini*. Enter therefore the dimension of calm breath; not only that: lift also the barycenter of your awareness.

You have learned the procedure: "*Short breath between Muladhara and each Chakra*". Do now at least one round of it (ten short breaths.) Then do once or twice the same procedure excluding *Muladhara* and *Swadhisthana*. Let me explain this concept:

Focus on the *Third Chakra Manipura*. When it comes natural to inhale, inhale without forcing the breath and pause an instant in the *Anahata Chakra*. Exhale when it comes natural to exhale and focus again on *Manipura*. Make a short pause. When it comes natural to inhale, inhale without forcing the breath and pause an instant in the fifth *Chakra*. Exhale when it comes natural to exhale and focus again on the *Manipura*. Repeat the procedure between the *Manipura* and *Bindu*; *Manipura* and *Medulla*; *Manipura* and fifth *Chakra*; *Manipura* and fourth *Chakra*.

Through this procedure the barycenter of your *Prana* has started to rise. Now it is in *Manipura*. Let us now focus our *Prana* upon the *Chakra* of the heart.

Focus on *Anahata Chakra*. When it comes natural to inhale, inhale without forcing the breath and pause an instant in the fifth *Chakra*. Exhale

when it comes natural to exhale and focus again on *Anahata*. Repeat the procedure between the *Anahata* and *Bindu*; *Anahata* and *Medulla*; *Anahata* and fifth *Chakra*. You have experienced four short breaths. Repeat and repeat them until you feel that the *Prana* is focused in the heart.

Guiding Omkar into Anahata

I have counseled you to study *Bhramari Pranayama*. Now you will understand why.

Inhale guiding the *Prana* up into the chest. Make a further short inhalation. Hold your breath. Relax the chest. You must feel well, at perfect ease. Still holding your breath go down with your awareness and also lower the chin slowly, mentally recreating the *Bhramari* vibration that goes on increasing its intensity. The *Bhramari* vibration reaches the heart region with an upsetting mental intensity. Don't forget that you are holding your breath – you feel in your mind that the vibration grows and grows without limits, but you produce no sound!

At a certain point the chin touches your breast bone with a kind of tap. This tap – Lahiri Mahasaya has remarked – opens wide the door of the heart.¹³

Obviously it is not the physical action that opens such door but what happens in your awareness. Some Acharyas state that this is the true *Thokar*. I have good reasons to trust their claim.

After this tap, hold your breath for various seconds, with *Maha Bandha*. Then finally exhale experiencing the joy that starts from the heart and expands in all the directions. Raise your head. Repeat this exercise from 6 to 12 times. When you will have mastered it, it will suffice for you to repeat it once.

Note

It is necessary to clarify that here we are not describing the mental chant of "Oooooommmmm." We are discussing how to mentally create a vibration that reminds us the typical sound of *Bhramari Pranayama*. It has been explained

¹³ "How can the main door of the internal temple be opened? The externally oriented breath has to be made internally oriented and then through the technique of *Thokar* it can open the door of the internal temple. When a forceful impact is made on the *Anahata Chakra* the the door opens. A spontaneous deep engrossment occurs and a state of being stable is increased. The obstruction of the *Anahata* is released and it is only then that the ignorance is thereby exterminated. A deep engrossment will arise and there will be settlement in the still state for a prolonged period. By achieving this state the mind becomes aggrieved by other's misery." (Lahiri Mahasaya)

Please remark that it is written: "A forceful impact" and not "A succession of impacts." I really believe that the technique "Guiding Omkar into the heart" can create such powerful impact. Perhaps the procedure "Advanced Form of *Thokar*" is only a preparation, a serious work that makes a *kriyaban* able to realize the "true" *Thokar*. '

that when we are able to recreate this mentally, then the practice is correct and the *kriyaban* enjoys of a perfect beatitude.

Comment to the third Routine

When the energetic state created in the abdominal region has fully risen into the heart region, experiences in the spine will start to happen.

After meditation, relax in the *Savasana* position and enter the state of deep sleep (*Turiya*.) Suddenly an extensive, yet intense Beauty is in front of you but somehow distant as within a kind of ideal horizon. You feel that Beauty, you recognize It and feel limitless joy. Your reaction is crying of nostalgic longing. The joy intensifies and you are not able to bear it anymore because it becomes like an aching pain. You are aware that your time has not yet come. You return to reality with tears in your eyes, tears of joy and burning devotion.

"My worship is of a very strange kind. Holy water is not required. No special utensils are necessary. Even flowers are redundant. In this worship, all gods have disappeared, and emptiness has merged with euphoria."
(*Lahiri Mahasaya*)



THIRD ROUTINE – VARIATION

In the introduction to second routine, we have learned *Maha Bandha* and a very simple form of *Thokar*. We called it "*Elementary form of Thokar*." Now we shall utilize it again. By directing it toward *Muladhara* we shall experience a very subtle form of *Kriya Pranayama*: PRANAYAMA WITH INTERNAL BREATH.

Third Routine – Variation

Preparation: part [I], [II], [III]
Kriya Pranayama (basic)
Navi Kriya or Kapalabhati
Thokar on Muladhara [*]
Internal breath [*]

[*] new parts

Explanation of the new parts

[Preparation: part [I], [II], [III] // Kriya Pranayama (basic) // Navi Kriya or Kapalabhati]

Thokar on Muladhara

Inhale deeply, hold your breath, bend your head to the left, then to the right, then lower the chin and practice *Maha Bandha* directing with a tap of the chin on the chest all the mental strength upon the *Anahata Chakra*. Holding your breath, repeat these three movements of your head one more time, then, always holding your breath repeat them again. At this point you can exhale coming down along the spine, feeling each *Chakra*.

Now inhale again, hold your breath, do the movements of your head, but now the strength of *Thokar* is directed toward the *Manipura Chakra*. Hold your breath and repeat all the procedure two more times.

I hope you intuitively understand what I mean writing: "the strength of *Thokar* is directed toward the *Manipura Chakra* ." It means that, while the movements of your head remain the same (...it could not be otherwise) when you practice *Maha Bandha* and when you apply the *Thokar*, all your concentration is directed to *Manipura*. You will see that it is not difficult.

Now inhale again, hold your breath, do the movements of your head, but now the strength of *Thokar* is directed toward the *Swadhisthana Chakra*. Hold your breath and repeat this two more times.

Finally inhale, hold your breath, do the same movements of your head, but now the strength of *Thokar* is directed toward the *Muladhara Chakra*. Hold your breath and repeat all the procedure two more times. [#]

Now a very important phenomenon happens!

Internal breath

Very slowly inhale one *Kriya* breath trying to feel that you are really entering the spine. You will discover that you can, very easily, guide the movement of the energy up the spine.

If you want to deepen the experience, then repeat different times the last phase of the previous practice, that is the practice we have marked with [#]. Try again to breathe a *Kriya* breath. Don't accept that any anxiety, any eagerness for extraordinary experience take possession of you. You will experience with renewed joy that you are really inside the spine and your *Pranayama* has become subtler than you ever thought possible.

When you feel clearly this movement of energy come up, then you can guide it down in the whole body or stop in the heart *Chakra*. This is accompanied by a tremendous perception of the *Om* sound. What you are experiencing is something surprising.

Try again and again to repeat the experience of *Thokar* directed upon the *Muladhara Chakra*.

You will feel the beauty and the strength of this process: for some days you will not desire any other thing to do. This work will seem you the most important thing you can ever do with your time.

During the day observe yourself. You will notice an alternation in your mood. Sometimes your nights will be characterized by mind-blowing dreams, sometimes you will live in the most sublime poetry. The effect of this technique is a shock take guides you to live allied with truth, extreme truth.

The movement of energy you have perceived is the epitome of the spiritual way of living: that in which you perceive the joy of existing up in the atoms. Perhaps you have neared such experience practicing the *Kriya Pranayama* coupled with *Aswini Mudra*.

– end of routine 3 Bis –



FOURTH ROUTINE

I hope you want to consider a practice neglected by a lot of schools. I am referring to the work on the cells of the body. During the *Kriya Pranayama* you can focus on all the cells of the body especially during the exhalation.

One can ask: why should I be occupied with this? Well, the effects of this practice go over what we can rationally expect. The deepest implications are explained in Chapter 16. Here I confine me to say that in order to obtain perfection in *Kriya Pranayama* and in order to make it solid and stable, one should feel one's consciousness in the cells of the body realizing the presence in them of a fresh energy that is like an internal breath. In this way the person overcomes the necessity to depend (in the final part of *Kriya*) upon pulmonary breathing.

Routine n.4

Preparation: parts [I], [II]

Kriya Pranayama with Maha Bandha (Elementary form of Thokar) [see Routine n.2]

Thokar on Muladhara [see Routine n.3 BIS]

K. cells [I] Guiding Kundalini [*]

K. cells [II] Bija Mantra [*]

K. cells [III] Pressure upon the Dantian region [*]

K. cells [IV] Fragmentation [*]

[*] new parts

Explanation of the new procedures of Routine 4

K. cells [I] – Guiding Kundalini

[Consider the procedure "Preparation [IV]: Guiding Kundalini" discussed in Routine n.1. In this variation we utilize the *Chakras* to guide energy and awareness into the cells of the body.

► Come up with 6 inhalations just feeling the Chakras.

Take a deep, strong inhalation (optional: create a strong mental sound VAAAA...) The length is about 4 seconds. Guide the energy from your body into the first *Chakra*. Feel *Kundalini* in the first *Chakra* and exhale rapidly with

mouth open "huh." The length of the exhalation is about half second. During this exhalation *Kundalini* remains in the first *Chakra*.

Now there is another inhalation like the previous. Feel that the energy comes upward from the first *Chakra* to the second. After feeling *Kundalini* in the second *Chakra* exhale rapidly with mouth open "huh" ... just like the previous. During this exhalation *Kundalini* remains in the second *Chakra*.

The procedure is repeated guiding *Kundalini* to the third *Chakra*, then to the fourth, the fifth and finally to Ajna always starting from Muladhara (optionally with the mental sound of VAAAAA.....)

Come down reaching the cells through the *Chakras*.

Visualize that the body is divided into horizontal sections: one part of the body for each *Chakra*. Well, the various exhalations make you not only feel the *Chakras* but also how they radiate energy into the whole region of the body related to a *Chakra*. We can say that the *Kriya* of the cells starts here with this simple preparation technique.

Take a rapid inhalation through the nose. The length is about 1 second. Feel that *Kundalini* is present in the seventh *Chakra*. Have a deep exhalation (optional: create a strong mental sound of SHEEE...) The length is about 4 seconds. Feel that the energy of *Kundalini* comes down from the seventh *Chakra* to the spiritual eye in the space between the eyebrows and from there to all the head.

Repeat the procedure guiding *Kundalini* from the seventh *Chakra* to the frontal part of the fifth Chakra: the Adam's apple and from there to all the muscles and skin of the neck.

Repeat the procedure guiding to the frontal part of the fourth *Chakra* – the central part of the breast bone and from there to all the parts of the body around the chest.

Repeat the procedure guiding to the frontal part of the third *Chakra* – the navel and from there to all the parts of the body around the navel.

Repeat the procedure guiding to the frontal part of the second *Chakra* and all the region around it.

Repeat the procedure guiding the seat of *Muladhara* and from there to buttocks and legs.

All this is one round. Three rounds are recommended.]

K. cells [II] – Bija Mantra

[The breath now flows smoothly as in the usual *Kriya Pranayama* procedure. Feel mentally the sound of the inhaling breath as VAAA... and the sound of the exhaling breath as SHEEE.... . No physical sound is perceived. Said in another way, you superimpose the mental Bija Mantra VAAA...- SHEEE.... upon the breath process.

► Imagine that the evolution has endowed you with another way of breathing. Suppose that the old way of introducing air in the lung has been replaced by a new process where breath and *Prana* enter through the pores of the skin. Imagine that during exhalation a refined substance goes down from the *Sahasrara* along the spine and spread through the *Chakras* in the body reaching the cells of the skin arousing in them an immortal consciousness. Totally focus on the SHEEE sound.

Before starting each exhalation try to open an internal way to reach the cells of your body. Visualize that the descending flow of energy permeates all the parts of the body, muscles, internal organs, skin, cells as if countless hypodermic needle injected energy and light in the cells of your body. Create a strong pressure of the awareness on your body. During the exhalation strengthen the intention to discover (I mean opening for the first time) an internal path to reach the cells of the whole body. The smallest particle of vitality in the air should no go out of your nose; all the vitality should be direct into the body.

During the exhalation feel a great sense of comfort. You have the impression that it could be indefinitely lengthened. A complete (up and down) energetic movement lasts around one minute.]

K. cells [III] – Pressure upon the Dantian region

[A mental pressure against the *Dantian* region is created and increased through concentration and will power.

► During inhalation visualize a powerful vibration departing from the sexual zone, absorbing the energy there and guiding it into the head. During ensuing exhalation come down crossing each *Chakra*, at the same time create greater and greater pressure in the *Dantian* region. Lengthen the exhalation.

During inhalation you have expanded the abdomen – during exhalation you contract the navel and move it toward the spine. The attention is focused on increasing the energy there. In the abdominal region an ecstatic sensation starts to appear.

The more you try to increase the intensity of this action, the more you will discover you are creating a pressure upon all the cells of your body.

You perceive a subtle joy – the pleasant feeling becomes orgasmic. Often you will realize that your chin has slightly lowered, direct toward the navel as if this were a magnet. [The body will remember that it is necessary to inhale interrupting the progressive increase of this joy.]]

K. cells [IV] Fragmentation

[In this exercise we practice a subtly fragmented breath. This fragmentation gives you the power to achieve the sublime dimension of Kriya of the cells.

The fragmented breath creates a continuous stimulus to Navel and thus to *Samana* current. During inhalation you will feel the essence of Sushumna, during exhalation you will enter a new dimension of cellular awareness which means to contact the Divine in the matter.

While the breath disappears, another dimension of existence emerges.

► Awareness comes up the spine

Inhale a very subtle fragmented breath. Constantly feel the spine. Visualize the energy coming up millimeter after millimeter like a guest plant winding around the rod of *Sushumna*. It seems that *Sushumna* is contracting. Breath after breath *Sushumna* becomes like steel. You realize that the breathless state is very near.

Awareness goes down toward the cells of the body

Now exhalation comes and with it the nucleus of the Kriya of the cells. The breath is very subtly fragmented. Constantly feel three things: the spine, the navel, the pressure upon the cells of your body. Don't put too much pressure and tensions. Come down peacefully and start again with inhalation – just like we have explained.

Repeat and repeat. At a certain point there is the idea of a great barrier being crossed. There is an inner source of fresh energy pressing upon the cells of the body: it is a feeling of infinite safety. Often, there is the experience of a continuous sound of *Om*.]

Final considerations

When you arrive next to the breathless state, you will be breathing through the cells of your body. A great barrier has been crossed: the breath as physical reality doesn't exist, there is no air that goes out through the nose. There is an internal source of fresh energy that makes you lighter and fills you with strength.

In time you will realize that this way of "breathing" has some amazing effects. The beauty of living as a wine from a full cup, seems to overflow from every atom and this realization fills your heart. It is a feeling of endless safety surrounded by a crystalline state of immobility.

This *Pranayama* is a process restoring your psychological health. It seems to destroy every mental jail that you have created. Your psychological problems, especially those tangled and confused, that concern the future, appear to you as an illusion from which you have definitely emerged.

A last remark

A last recommendation. Proceed always in a state of calm mind. If, at any moment, you feel the necessity to exhale and to inhale again, grant yourself such additional breath. Don't stress your body. If you have mastered the procedure: "Guiding Kundalini" you are an expert in the art of adding intermediary breathes without that the energetic flow be disturbed.

– end of routine 4 –



We are going to discuss a wonderful event.

This wonderful event happens spontaneously (... to be sincere, it is spontaneously up to a certain point...) Here we do a minimal effort to make it happen or to not disturb when it happens by itself.

This event contains a great teaching. It teaches to relax and, at the same time, to be watchful.

In today's practice we have no preparation, but we know that a preparation is necessary. How is it possible to come out of this contradiction? Simple: in the previous months you have always utilized a good preparation. Now, after a long practice you can experiment without preparation. You have accumulated the effect of your good work.

Routine n.4 BIS

You have worked hard during the previous days. // Today you are tired and don't want to work. // You would like to have a Kriya that happens by itself. // What I ask is this: try to remain perfectly aware ready to enjoy a fantastic process.

Spontaneous Kriya [*]

Explanation of the new concept

Spontaneous Kriya

You sit correctly but you do not want to practice. You know what to do but you want to see if the movement of the energy comes spontaneously. Well, visualize your *Kutastha* as if it were a cave where you, having become small, find shelter there to rejoice a feeling of rest.

At a certain point a breath happens. Your body is inhaling. Enjoy this breath, and in order to fully enjoy, make it deep. At the end of inhalation hold your breath, feel all the beauty of a completed inhalation. Let your body exhale. Make it deep and enjoy the exhalation.

Here we have something analogous to the *Hong So* technique. Here you don't worry about the length of the breath, the pauses, the numbers... nothing is important save that the breath is deep and you want to enjoy each part of it. You want to feel the fresh air of inhalation and the warm of exhalation. If you slide into a *Hong So* mechanism (where you let 100% everything happen by itself without participating in the event) nothing interesting will happen. If you want to produce a great experience you must let the things happen but you must make the breath deep and enjoy it instant after instant.

This is the secret

- a) make the breath deep although it starts spontaneous
- b) don't be bored but enjoy each second of your breathing process
- c) no visualization of Chakras and/or Sushumna – only breath

From a certain moment onwards inhalation appears accompanied by an energetic feeling in the spine at the level of the heart. Then exhalation appears accompanied by an energetic feeling in the frontal part of the body and then in the whole body. This is not the "Kriya of the cells". No, this is pure perception of what it is happening and enjoying.

This event goes ahead and you observe it without distractions. Enjoy any perception of energy. During the exhalation you have the impression of becoming – you are feeling you are pure energy and not a body – all the things that surround you. Normally (but every type of exception is possible) the inhalation is shorter than the exhalation and has a soft sound, while the exhalation is long and the sound of the breath is clear and strong.

Then you rejoice of this event – nay, you are totally lost in it – and you let the time go by without counting the number of the breaths. Well, continuing in such way, all of a sudden you will feel the current that is moving by itself. If you are

able to focus only in this rejoicing without intervening in some way, without philosophizing, it will become more and more intense. Then you will smile understanding that we, when practicing *Kriya Pranayama* trying to increase the perception of the energy that goes up and goes down, we make only damage, we hinder a process that, instead, if spontaneous, would be so great that I would be almost impossible to contain all the beauty coming from it. Go ahead as much as you can hold.

– end of routine 4 BIS –

